Lizama sentenced to 2 years in prison for identity theft. PAGE 2
Legislature's OK sought in D&W request for 15-year lease. PAGE 3

Hafa Adai!

75¢

Saipan Tribune

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IPI proposes global agreement to settle CCC's 5 complaints

By **FERDIE DE LA TORRE**
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Imperial Pacific International (CNMI) LLC has proposed to enter a global settlement agreement with the Commonwealth Casino Commission to settle all CCC's five enforcement complaints against IPI.

CCC board chair Edward C. Deleon Guer-

See CCC on Page 4

Commonwealth Casino Commission board chair Edward C. Deleon Guerrero presides over the commission's monthly meeting yesterday at the CCC conference room at the Springs Plaza building in Gualo Rai. He disclosed that Imperial Pacific International (CNMI) LLC has proposed a global settlement that will resolve CCC's five complaints against IPI.

FERDIE DE LA TORRE

IPI up-to-date with payroll

By **FERDIE DE LA TORRE** and **KIMBERLY A. BAUTISTA**
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REPORTERS

All of Imperial Pacific International (CNMI) LLC's payroll issues have been resolved for now.

» **Yumul says casino's opening date is a moving target**
» **Foreign workers refusing repatriation**

Meanwhile, IPI continues to face issues with repatriating its foreign workers as more and more continue to refuse efforts to make them leave for their home countries.

Commonwealth Casino Commission executive di-

See IPI on Page 4

NMTI moves forward as technical institute

After 180 days of transition from its original status as a trades school, the new NMTI board of trustees will officially move forward plans to kick off the Northern Marianas Technical Institute, ushering in a new and stronger era of providing more comprehensive hands-on technical training programs and resources in mechanical and skilled trades to prepare residents for job opportunities within the CNMI.

On Aug. 13, 2020, in accordance with Public Law 20-92, which created the Northern Marianas Technical Institute, a transition committee, appointed by Gov. Ralph DLG Torres and Lt. Gov. Arnold I. Palacios

See NMTI on Page 4

COVID-19 vaccinations capped at 4,800

By **JUSTINE NAUTA**
justine_nauta@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

As of Feb. 23, the CNMI is only able to accommodate 4,800 new registration for COVID-19 vaccinations, according to Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. chief executive officer Esther Muña.

Muña

Speaking at a media briefing last Friday, Muña disclosed that because the CNMI only has enough doses left for about 4,800 individuals, as of Feb. 23, CHCC is prioritizing the *man'amko* and those with underlying medical conditions.

Because COVID-19 vaccination is a two-shot regimen, CHCC needs to ensure that it has enough vaccines for both doses on stock so that all reg-

See COVID-19 on Page 4

COMMUNITY VULNERABILITY

LEGEND:
- **Red:** Least safe
- **Orange**
- **Yellow**
- **Blue**
- **Green:** Safest

Source: Office of the Governor

AT A GLANCE

As of 7pm, Feb. 24, 2021

GUAM	OLD	NEW	TOTAL
Positive	7,727	2	7,729
Recovered	7,555	0	7,555
Active	42	2	44
Deaths	130	0	130
Cumulative Number of Persons Tested			125,731

SAIPAN	OLD	NEW	TOTAL
Positive	143	0	143
Traced via Travel Screening	117	0	117
Traced via Community Screening	26	0	26
Deaths	2	0	2
Cumulative Number of Persons Tested			26,131*
Days since last community transmission			189

VACCINATIONS IN THE CNMI

Saipan:	Tinian:	Rota:
Dose 1: 8,943	Dose 1: 373	Dose 1: 523
Dose 2: 6,602	Dose 2: 137	Dose 2: 170

*Total count includes the number of persons tested on Saipan, Tinian, and Rota. With guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, CHCC has opted not to report active and recovered cases.

Source: Joint Information Center - Guam, Commonwealth Healthcare Corp.

INSIDE

LOCAL
Keyla B. Flores, graduates from Advanced Individual Training as Top 2 in her class.

PAGE 11

BUSINESS
Book a golf game with friends at Coral Ocean Resort for only $35 until the end of March.

PAGE 13

LIFE & STYLE
One of the world's better known fans of mystery novels, Hillary Rodham Clinton, is now writing one.

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GOT A NEWS TIP? TEL: 235-6397 / 235-2440 FAX: 235-3740 EMAIL: editor@saipantribune.com

Local

Lizama sentenced to 2 years in prison for identity theft

A man was sentenced in the U.S. Court for the Northern Mariana Islands to two years in prison for pretending to be his brother and stealing $30,850 from his brother's bank account.

Brian Galang Lizama, 49, was sentenced in the U.S. Court for the Northern Mariana Islands to 24 months imprisonment for aggravated identity theft. The court also ordered Lizama to pay $30,850 in restitution, serve one year of supervised release following imprisonment, perform 50 hours of community service, and pay a mandatory $100 special assessment fee.

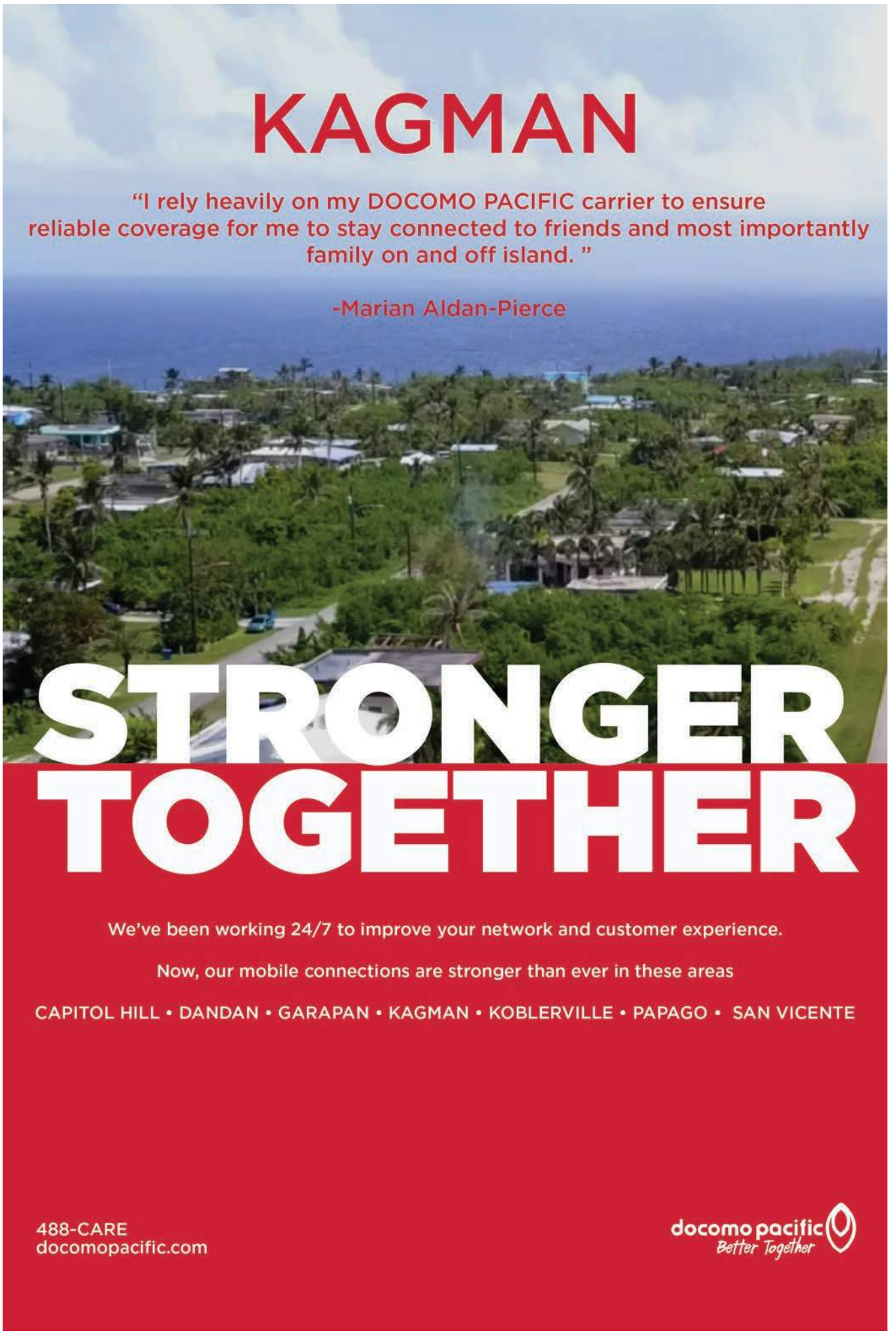
According to a statement yesterday from the U.S. Attorney's Office, Lizama obtained a copy of his brother's birth certificate from the Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. in December 2019 and he used the certificate to obtain an identification card in his brother's name from the Saipan Mayor's Office.

Lizama then used the identification card to withdraw a total of $30,850 from his brother's Bank of Guam savings account. Lizama's brother discovered the theft upon later checking the balance on his savings account by phone.

"Theft scams occur by many methods, including the unlawful use of identity documents. The substantial loss in this matter warranted federal prosecution," said U.S. Attorney Shawn N. Anderson.

He urged the public to take precautions with their personal information and regularly monitor their financial accounts to combat activities like this. If someone suspects they may be a victim of identity theft, contact law enforcement immediately. Additional assistance may be obtained at IdentityTheft.gov or by calling the Federal Trade Commission at (877) 438-4338.

This case was investigated by the Federal Bureau of Investigation, with assistance from the CNMI Department of Public Safety. The case was prosecuted by Garth R. Backe, assistant U.S. Attorney in the District of the Northern Mariana Islands. ***(USAO)***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-Marian Aldan-Pierce
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Road closure in Chalan Kiya today

The Commonwealth Utilities Corp. will be relocating today one concrete power pole across the road along Chalan Monsignor Guerrero Road, resulting in all four lanes of the road being closed to traffic for about 15 to 20 minutes.

In an advisory this week, CUC said the concrete pole relocation itself—which is part of CUC's project to build a new sewer line in Chalan Kiya—is estimated to last five hours, from 9am to 2pm.

To maximize public safety and to minimize the power pole relocation time, both outer lanes along the Chalan Monsignor Guerrero Road (the northern westbound and southern eastbound lanes) will be closed around the project site for the duration of the project, then all four driving lanes will be closed for about 15 to 20 minutes between 9am and 2pm.

Additionally, there will be a scheduled power outage from 9am to 2pm for portions of Chalan Kiya and the Chalan Monsignor Guerrero Road.

CUC advises motorists to proceed with caution when traveling by the work site or take an alternative route as the road lanes will be closed during the project.

To see if you are affected, check CUC's official Facebook page to see their map. ***(Justine Nauta)***

House minority refurbishes Navy Hill basketball court

By NEIL FAMA
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REPORTER

In a span of just three days, members of the House of Representatives minority bloc and staff, with the help of the Tan Siu Lin Foundation, USA Fanter Corp., Hong Ye Hardware, Saipan Mayor's Office, the Department of Fire and Emergency Services, and other volunteers, fully restored and beautified the Navy Hill Basketball Court, located across the Rota and Tinian liaison offices in Lower Navy Hill.

The lawmakers got to work on Monday morning at 8am, and with the help of everyone on the team, were able to complete the project at a much faster rate than they were expecting.

The court itself was waterblasted to clear years of soil buildup that stained the court's floor, then gave it a fresh coat of paint, with the words "Navy Hill" painted on one side.

According to Rep. John Paul Sablan (R-Saipan), the rims of the basketball court hoops were undamaged, so that saved them a lot of time from having to repair them. Instead, they were able to focus on repainting the entire court area, including the bleachers, and fixing the fences.

In addition, the trees that once blocked the view of the Rota and Tinian liaison offices were trimmed with the help of Saipan Mayor's Office workers.

When asked where he drew inspiration for his designs for the paintings on the court, Rep. Joel Castro Camacho (R-Saipan) said there is a town in South Korea whose buildings and pavements were splattered with amazing designs. That's where he got some of his ideas, in addition to artwork that he saw in his last trip to Guam with his fiancée.

"I took those inspirations and used them to apply my take with my art on these projects, leaving a signature on every village we work on," Camacho said.

Minority bloc spokesman Rep. Angel Demapan (R-Saipan) described the project's success as a "tremendous" benefit for the community. "And I hope that they get to appreciate it again like it's brand new and to bring back the sportsmanship and camaraderie here in this village."

In addition to their efforts to repair as many recreational activity areas in different precincts, Demapan said they also aim to work on projects on Tinian. "The goal is to continue supporting each other, regardless of what precinct we come from and where the village is situated. At the end of the day it's for the community."

With 85% of the project completed on just the second day, leaving the final touches on the repair of the fence to be done today, the entire project is expected to be completed this afternoon.

This project is part of the minority lawmakers' ongoing mission to renovate and reinvigorate the multiple recreational areas of the different precincts in the CNMI.

Legislature's OK sought in D&W request for 15-year lease

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Public Lands Secretary Marianne Concepcion-Teregeyo has resubmitted to the Legislature for its approval the application of D&W Saipan Inc. for a 15-year lease extension of its public land lease in Gualo Rai.

In a Feb. 3 letter to legislative leaders, Concepcion-Teregeyo said DPL's first packet was submitted to the 21st Legislature on Aug. 26, 2020, prior to the expiration of D&W Saipan's 25-year lease last Sept. 30, 2020. A public hearing was held on Sept. 16, 2020, but it was not acted upon for approval since then.

The secretary said DPL supports D&W's request for the lease extension. D&W owns the Shell gas station and the tire shop along Middle Road in Gualo Rai.

D&W first entered into a 25-year lease agreement with the Division of Public Lands, Department of Lands and Natural Resources on Oct. 4, 1995.

Concepcion-Teregeyo said the lessee has maintained a good relationship with DPL, had been compliant with the lease's provisions, and has kept its account current.

Under the proposed lease extension agreement, D&W will pay a 5% increase in its current annual base rent for the first five years of the extended term. The company will then pay 5% of the appraised market value of the improved land every five-year period thereafter, but will not be less than the rate paid by lessee during the preceding five-year period and a percentage of its Business Gross Revenue.

In addition, Concepcion-Teregeyo said the company agrees to give 20% *man'amko* discounts for parts and maintenance repair services, 10% discount on oil change, and 10% discount for military veterans/active reservists holding authorized cards and loyalty award discount program for regular customers.

She said D&W will also provide $2,500 annually for the educational scholarship of Northern Marianas descent eligible recipients.

2 NMI students on honor roll at Dixie State U

ST. GEORGE, Utah—Two CNMI-born students—Adrian David and Ciscabelle David—have landed on the President's and Dean's List recognition at Dixie State University for the fall 2020 semester.

In total, 32% of the university's full-time students were named to the honor rolls. Specifically, 1,054 students were highlighted on the President's List, and 1,324 on the Dean's List. Overall, 2,378 students were included on the university's honor roll. Inclusion requires students to complete a minimum of 15 credits, with President's List awardees achieving a GPA of 3.9 or higher and students on the Dean's List obtaining a GPA of 3.5 to 3.89. ***(PR)***

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SALE PRICE $21,995 | 44,586 MILES | STK:15P303 | KBB: $24,377

2019 MITSUBISHI OUTLANDER SE
SALE PRICE $18,995 | 11,486 MILES | STK:19HS967 | KBB: $19,633

2015 MAZDA MAZDA5 VAN
SALE PRICE $8,995
61,806 MILES • STK: 20M138A • KBB:$9,900

2018 MAZDA MAZDA3 SPORT
SOLD
SALE PRICE $14,995
8,730 MILES • STK:8HS878 • KBB: $19,449

2018 MAZDA MAZDA6 SPORT
SALE PRICE $16,995
7,365 MILES • STK:18HS965C • KBB: $22,095

2014 MAZDA CX-9
SALE PRICE $12,995
34,682 MILES • STK:4P298 • KBB: $13,199

2018 MAZDA MAZDA3 SPORT
SALE PRICE $14,995
7,910 MILES • STK:8HS875 • KBB: $19,496

2019 HYUNDAI KONA SE
SALE PRICE $16,995
11,601 MILES • STK:19HS999 • KBB: $18,793

2017 MAZDA MAZDA3 SPORT
SALE PRICE $13,995
38,494 MILES • STK:7R235 • KBB: $16,146

2016 HYUNDAI VELOSTER
SALE PRICE $14,995
39,217MILES • STK: 20H068–A • KBB: $15,830

2018 HONDA CIVIC EXT
SALE PRICE $17,995
10,640 MILES • STK:18HS946 • KBB: $20,609

2017 MAZDA MAZDA3 SPORT
SALE PRICE $13,995
34,789 MILES • STK:7R218 • KBB: $15,129

2016 HYUNDAI TUCSON GL
SOLD
SALE PRICE $15,995
58,260 MILES • STK: 20D063A • KBB: $16,231

2018 HONDA CIVIC EXT
SALE PRICE $18,995
9,993 MILES • STK:18HS935 • KBB: $22,425

2016 TOYOTA PRIUS C
SALE PRICE $14,995
48,814 MILES • STK:20D134A • KBB: $16,585

2017 MAZDA CX-3 GT AWD
SALE PRICE $16,995
18,475 MILES • STK: 7P295 • KBB: $18,470

2015 TOYOTA HIGHLANDER LE
SALE PRICE $18,995
62,811 MILES • STK:5HS735A • KBB: $19,031

2017 MAZDA MAZDA6 GT
SALE PRICE $15,995
44,751 MILES • STK:17P305 • KBB: $17,242

2019 MITSUBISHI ECLIPSE CROSS
SOLD
SALE PRICE $18,995
7,135 MILES • STK: 19HS983 • KBB: $19,350

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8,214 MILES • STK:19P299 • KBB: $28,460

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Garapan Core gets water-blasted, fresh coat of pain

By BEA CABRERA
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CORRESPONDENT

The Garapan Revitalization Task Force did water-blasting and repainting of parallel parking markers in the Garapan Core yesterday, as it prepares the total makeover of the CNMI's tourism and business center.

Office and Planning Development deputy director Chris Concepcion led the task force team in the cleanup and said it was a team effort by various public and private agencies.

"Today, various CNMI government agencies who are members of the Garapan Revitalization Task Force partnered with our friends at TanHoldings to water-blast streets and repaint parallel parking markers in Garapan Core. …The Commonwealth Office of Transit Authority is a member of the Garapan Revitalization Task Force so I reached out to them and all members to see if they could assist us with manpower and they came through for us," he said.

Others that helped out included staff from the Department of Public Works, Department of Fire and Emergency Medical Services, Saipan Zoning Office, American Memorial Park, Kinpachi Japanese Restaurant, PDM Promoters, Inc., Triple J Saipan, Inc., and the Office of Planning and Development under the Office of the Governor and Office of the Lt. Governor.

The U.S. Economic Development Administration recently awarded the CNMI $11.2 million to rebuild roads in the Garapan Core. It will cover the resurfacing and regrading of all streets within Garapan Core, the construction of sidewalks and curbs on both sides of each street, adding new modern energy efficient lighting, attractive landscaping, and more street parking.

"Street markings are important to instill a sense of order in an urban area like Garapan. This is the most commercialized area in the CNMI with the majority of hotels, restaurants, gift shops, and other businesses located here. Designating parallel parking stalls sets standards for the public to adhere to and it creates a safe zone for vehicles and pedestrians," he added.

Early this week, the Department of Public Works added more one-way streets in western Garapan to improve the flow of traffic. Concepcion said that these one-way street signs are based on their existing traffic flow plans for the whole Garapan Core.

"This allows for a more orderly atmosphere for everyone who frequents the area. It will allow for parallel parking on one side, while leaving room on the other for through-traffic and emergency vehicles to pass. The one-way streets will not be effective until the signs are completely installed and the public is educated and informed of the changes. The task force will follow the lead of the [Department of Public Works] Roads & Grounds Division…This is just the beginning as more great things to come," he added.

The Garapan Revitalization Task Force, supported by the Office and Planning Development under the Office of the Governor, was formed in 2019.

Garapan Revitalization Task Force members water-blast the street along Hotel Street in Garapan as part of the long-term plans and efforts of the Garapan Revitalization Task Force to make Garapan a top tourist destination.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

DESPITE LOOMING DEADLINE

DOL still waiting for PUA funding

By KIMBERLY A. BAUTISTA
kimberly_bautista@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The deadline to submit applications for the second round of Pandemic Unemployment Assistance and Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation is just around the corner but, according to CNMI Department of Labor, they have yet to receive funding from the U.S. Department of Labor.

In a brief interview over the phone, CNMI Labor Secretary Vicky Benavente said that DOL has not disbursed any payments yet because there is still no funding available.

The online portal where applicants can apply for PUA/FPUC assistance was reopened less than a month before the program's expiration, which is March 13.

According to guidelines from USDOL, the deadline for submission of PUA and FPUC claims will end on March 13. However, Benavente said DOL can't send out payments and are still waiting for the funds.

CNMI DOL and USDOL agreed on about $185 million for the extended 11 weeks of PUA and FPUC.

Fortunately, CNMI DOL has been assured that the CNMI will receive PUA and FPUC funding and it's just a matter of when.

Various news outlets have reported that Guam DOL is currently issuing benefits every Tuesday since reopening the PUA and FPUC program back on Jan. 14. Earlier this month, Guam DOL received over $80 million for the program.

CNMI DOL, on the other hand, only began accepting applications on Feb. 16 and to date, has not disbursed any funds yet.

In addition, Benavente said the portal is facing issues, again, and seems to be more complex than the first time around.

The PUA program provides temporary benefits to individuals whose employment or self-employment has been lost or interrupted as a direct result of COVID-19. The PUA program, through the Continued Assistance Act, provides eligible applicants in the CNMI with 11 weeks of unemployment benefits starting on Dec. 27, 2020, to March 13, 2021.

Individuals may apply for PUA if they have had a week(s) of full or partial unemployment on or after Dec. 27, 2020, through March 13, 2021, as a result of COVID-19. Individuals may file applications for PUA starting today, Feb. 16, 2021, and ending March 13, 2021.

IPI

From Page 1

rector Andrew Yeom informed the CCC commissioners at the board's monthly meeting yesterday that IPI's payroll delay has been resolved at the moment. Yeom said that IPI paid the payrolls for Jan. 1, 2021 to Feb. 12, 2021.

This developed as IPI chief executive officer Ray N. Yumul said yesterday that IPI has plans to reopen its casino but the opening date is a moving target.

Yeom said that, according to IPI Finance manager Frances Mafnas, all of the IPI's outstanding payroll for last year, as well as the four payrolls for this year, has been disbursed and are all up to date.

Yumul echoed this, saying that IPI's payroll is up-to-date as of last pay period number four.

Speaking at the public comments portion of the CCC meeting yesterday, Yumul said everyone would like to see IPI reopen soon so that it may pay its annual license, regulatory fees, pay the vendors, and settle all lawsuits, and most especially put people back to work.

"IPI needs to accomplish all these to be a business in good standing within the community," Yumul said.

He said all indicators of a shuttered tourism industry is clear all around. "I myself don't expect tourism travel to resume until the middle of next year," he said.

He said IPI is not immune to the economic hardship the CNMI is facing.

He said the back wages and penalties due to the U.S. Department of Labor in connection with a lawsuit against IPI will not be satisfied directly via wire transfer funds and may not involve crane funds.

Repatriation

In IPI's sixth status report with the U.S. District Court for the NMI, IPI lawyer Michael Dotts said that repatriation continues to be problematic. As of last Tuesday, four Thailand workers have been successfully repatriated but no new departures are scheduled, he said. This is because a few have refused to leave the island until they are paid their back wages, while others are looking at changing their status and travel restrictions in some places have yet to be lifted.

Of the six Malaysians remaining, one has applied to renew his CW visa status with IPI, and the other five do not want to depart until they are fully paid, Dotts said.

As for the remaining 11 Taiwanese workers, all have applied to change their status from H-2B to CNMI-Only Transitional Worker with a different employer.

The remaining 106 Mongolians have also applied to change their status from H-2B to CW-1 but Dotts said whether they are able to so or not is questionable. IPI is unable to repatriate the Mongolians because of travel restriction at this time anyhow.

A longer version of this story is available at www. saipantribune.com

COVID-19

From Page 1

istrants are able to get their second doses when it's scheduled. It is not clear yet when the CNMI will get more doses.

In Guam, the limited supply of the COVID-19 vaccine has resulted in postponing the scheduled vaccination for this Saturday, Feb. 27. Those who are affected will be expecting a call from the University of Guam's call center on behalf of the Department of Public Health and Social Services.

For the CNMI, Muña said that at this time, the hospital will prioritize the *man'amko* who are 55 years and older. Muña said that these individuals and those with medical conditions, they can make a request with their medical provider. CHCC already has a system in place where the doctor, or physician, that can send a message to CHCC to let them know that an individual does meet the category of someone with medical conditions or is 55 years or older, so that they can be put "in front of the line."

"We are actively trying to get our numbers up for the *man'amko* and those with medical conditions. We already have a system in place for those who want to be vaccinated, and they can just contact their doctor by phone, especially if they have a medical record at their primary care provider," said Muña.

As for Guam, they will continue with vaccinations once supply is restored, and additional vaccination clinics will be scheduled and will be announced so that individuals who can complete their vaccination series.

It was learned that those who were anticipating their second dose of the Pfizer/BioNTech vaccine on Saturday can get their second dose on Feb. 26.

NMTI

From Page 1

held their first meeting to guide the trades institute's transition into a technical institute. The committee, led by board chair Mario Valentino, a construction professional with years of management experience, initiated the 180-day timeline for the committee to create a transition plan, as mandated by P.L. 20-92.

On Feb. 9, 2021, at the end of the 180 days, Valentino submitted a transition report that included the committee's work, while there were still pending some required items. With the submission of the transition report, the board—pursuant to P.L. 20-92, Section 8 (g)—shall have full control and supervision of the Northern Marianas Technical Institute.

"The board of trustees will take on the necessary task of fully completing the other pending transition processes and to move forward in a new beginning for the Northern Marianas Technical Institute. The board looks forward to working together with the four-member Advisory Council…as well as an interim chief executive officer, whom the [board] will need to appoint," said Valentino.

A longer version of this story is available at www. saipantribune.com

CCC

From Page 1

rero disclosed IPI's proposal at yesterday's CCC board meeting at the commission's office in Gualo Rai. He did not elaborate.

The CCC evidentiary hearing on the consolidated two cases is set to commence today, Thursday, at 10am.

In an interview after the meeting, Deleon Guerrero said they have amended the meeting's agenda so they can entertain the so-called global settlement today, Thursday, at 9am.

The chairman said yesterday morning that CCC executive director Andrew Yeom and their lawyer, assistant attorney general Michael Ernest, advised them that IPI has put forward a global settlement proposal in reference to the five enforcement actions.

Deleon Guerrero said he has no information as to what's in the proposed global deal as he is not privy to it and has not seen it. "But I would expect that it would deal with what CCC is demanding in terms of the alleged violations," he said.

The CCC, through its executive director, initiated the five enforcement actions against IPI as its been very concerned about IPI's alleged violations of the casino license agreement.

A longer version of this story is available at www. saipantribune.com

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OVR helps 175 get jobs or pursue higher education

By JUSTINE NAUTA
justine_nauta@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Since 2019, the Pre-Employment Transition Services program under The Office of Vocational Rehabilitation has already assisted 175 individuals, ranging in ages from 16 to 21, on either getting a job or pursuing higher education.

OVR Pre-ETS planner Tiava To'omata said the Pre-ETS program is for high school students between the ages 16 and 21 who are receiving services under the Special Education program with an individualized Education Plan or 504 plan, which are formal plans that schools develop to give children with disabilities the support they need.

It was learned that the program focuses on transitioning these students to either the workforce or postsecondary education. It offers trainings based on the five cores of the program: work-based learning, work readiness training, self-advocacy, counseling on postsecondary education, and job exploration.

Of about $900,000 that Rehabilitation Services Administration provides OVR through the U.S. Department of Education, 15% is mandated by the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014 for the Pre-ETS program, To'omata said. This is a continuous grant that guarantees OVR funding for the program.

To date, OVR has had 175 individuals under the program, with 22 individuals who are currently enrolled. These individuals are put into establishments that OVR has already pre-screened.

According to Pre-ETS coordinator Samuel Santos, OVR is conducting an outreach on Tinian until Feb. 26. As for Rota, Santos said that there will be one in March but it is not confirmed if the outreach will be in person or online.

"Any business interested may avail to receiving one of our consumers. We pre-screen the consumers' interest(s) and vocational goals and match it with the different positions that the businesses who we reached out to or vice-versa. We do not charge any cost to businesses or interested individuals who would like to apply for our programs," said To'omata.

To'omata said that OVR was able to check on their first Paid Work Experience trainee under the Pre-ETS program, Virgie Elis, last Feb. 17. To'omata said that Herman's Modern Bakery general manager Annie Hayes informed OVR that Elis has been doing a great job and they look forward to her continuing her training at the bakery.

"Virgie, likewise, has been enjoying this 'new learning experience' as she gets to work hands-on with very helpful staff. OVR extends our appreciation to Herman's Modern Bakery for continuously being one of our stellar business partners and for employing and training people with disabilities," said To'omata.

Businesses who wish to avail of this program can contact OVR's executive director Maryann Borja or To'omata at 322-6537/8 or email at maryann@ovrgov.net or tiava@ovrgov.net. Individuals with disabilities who wish to enroll in the program can contact Borja or To'omata or visit their establishment's special needs department.

Siblings graduate from basic training

By NEIL L. FAMA
neil_fama@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

A pair of siblings—Kyle Tyrus James L. Salvosa and Chloe Hazel Anne P. Salvosa—have graduated from Basic Military Training, with the former entering the U.S. Navy, and the latter entering the U.S. Air Force.

Chloe

Kyle

Chloe Salvosa, after graduating at Marianas High School in 2018 with honors, first studied at Seton Hall University in New Jersey, Institute of Technology and then gave the U.S. Air Force a shot. She set off for boot camp on Dec. 7, 2020 and graduated Basic Military Training at Lackland, Texas just this year, Jan. 28, 2021.

Kyle Salvosa, who is also an alumnus of Marianas High School and graduated with the Class of 2020, ventured off to San Diego in September that same year to explore his options and ended up working at DoorDash for a brief time before deciding to join the U.S. Navy. He got admitted and was sent to boot camp on Sept. 18 2020. Just this month, Kyle Salvosa graduated from Basic Military Training and is currently waiting for his orders to transfer to Connecticut to take on being a sonar technician. After his course's completion, Kyle Salvosa will be stationed in a submarine.

According to their father, Joel Prinze Salvosa, who has been a resident of the CNMI for over 20 years, all his children did very well in school, joined sports, became altar servers, but also had fun whenever they could. He said he is proud that his children are now serving the country.

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS
CNMI GOVERNMENT

INVITATION TO BID
ITB NO.: DPW/SWMD21-ITB-022

SUBMISSION DATE: March 25, 2021 TIME: 10:00 A.M.

"Procurement of Services for Removal, Packaging, Containment, and Shipping of Hazardous E-Waste Materials collected at the Lower Base Transfer Station"

COPIES OF THE SPECIFICATIONS MAY BE OBTAINED AT THE TECHNICAL SERVICES DIVISION, DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS, LOCATED ON SECOND FLOOR, OLEAI JOETEN COMMERCIAL CENTER, SAN JOSE, SAIPAN, DURING REGULAR WORKING HOURS.

THE PROVISIONS OF THE CNMI PROCUREMENT REGULATIONS, NMIAC SECTION 70-30.3-725 AND 70-30.3-730 PROHIBITING GRATUITIES, KICKBACKS AND CONTINGENT FEES SHALL APPLY.

A non-refundable payment of **Fifty Dollars ($50.00)** is required for each set. Payment must be made to the CNMI Treasurer and a receipt of payment must be presented when obtaining the Scope of Work at DPW Technical Services Division required for each set.

There will be a **Mandatory Pre-bid Conference** for this project on **March 16, 2021**, 9:00 a.m. local time at the **Rota Mayor Office, Rota**. The Prospective bidders are encouraged to familiarize themselves with the site. All question regarding this project must be submitted in writing no later than 4:30 p.m. local time on **March 23, 2021** to **Mr. Blas T. Mafnas, Acting Director of Solid Waste Management Division**, Lower Base Transfer Station, Saipan or fax to (670) 322-2726. Response to questions shall be shared with prospective bidders.

THE CNMI GOVERNMENT RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY OR ALL BIDS, OR PORTIONS THEREOF, AND WAIVE IMMATERIAL DEFECTS IF TO DO SO WOULD BE IN THE BEST INTEREST OF THE CNMI GOVERNMENT.

/S/ JAMES A. ADA
SECRETARY, DPW

/S/ FRANCISCO C. AGUON
ACTING DIRECTOR, P&S

Northern Marianas College
Procurement and Property Management
P.O. Box 501250 • Saipan, MP 96950 U.S.A.
Phone: (670) 237-6824
www.marianas.edu

CONSULTING SERVICES
REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
NMC RFP 21-001

Northern Marianas College (The College) is soliciting competitive sealed Proposals for the Consulting Services for the Aquaculture Parks, Saipan, Tinian and Rota projects.

Specifications and Scope of Work packets may be picked up at the **NMC Procurement Office, Bldg. P, commencing February 08, 2021 between the hours of 9:00-11:30 a.m.** for the Electronic packet, please send request to Anita Camacho (anita.camacho@marianas.edu).

Pre-Proposal conference is scheduled for February 17, 2021 09:00am. attendance is strongly recommended. NMC continues to practice social distancing due to the ongoing COVID 19 restrictions. The pre-proposal conference will take place through video conference technology, Zoom. Zoom ID No.: 939 6768 1365.

Electronic Proposal submission:
NMCRFP21-001@marianas.edu
Due Date/Time: 4:00 pm, March 11, 2021, (CNMI).

Sealed Proposal, hard copies submission:
Procurement & Property Management Office, Bldg. P, As Terlaje Campus
Due Date and Time: 4:00pm, March 11, 2021, (CNMI).

Paid for by 100% Federal Funds through USDA-NIFA, authorized under the Smith Lever Act Section 3b & 3c award# 2017-41100.

In accordance with Public Law 15-95 and as further amended by Public Law 15-118, Local Preference is not available to local businesses for this procurement.

This solicitation does not constitute an offer and does not obligate the College in any way. The College reserves the right to reject any and/or all bids for any reason and waive any defect in said bids, or cancel in part or its entirety this IFB, if it deems, in its sole discretion, it is in the best interest of the College.

Approved by:

/s/ Anita Camacho
Procurement & Property Manager

Paid for by 100% Federal Funds through USDA-NIFA, authorized under the Smith Lever Act Section 3b & 3c award# 2017-41100 and the Hatch Act as amended August 11, 1955, award #2019-31100 (Regular).

The Northern Marianas College is a Land Grant Institution accredited by the Senior College and University Commission of the Western Association for Schools and Colleges.

DIVISION OF PROCUREMENT SERVICES
CNMI GOVERNMENT

INVITATION TO BID
ITB NO.: ITB21-OGM/RDCCA-046

SUBMISSION DATE: MARCH 18, 2021 • TIME: 10:00 A.M.

"PURCHASE OF ONE (1) NEW UTILITY SIDE-BY-SIDE VEHICLE FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY & CULTURAL AFFAIRS (ROTA BRANCH) UNDER THE OFFICE OF GRANTS MANAGEMENT & STATE CLEARINGHOUSE"

COPIES OF THE SPECIFICATIONS MAY BE OBTAINED AT THE OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR OF PROCUREMENT SERVICES, LOCATED AT THE FORMER EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT OFFICE, ASCENCION DRIVE, BUILDING NO. 1301, CAPITOL HILL, SAIPAN, DURING REGULAR WORKING HOURS.

****FOR YOUR SAFETY & OURS: ALL INTERESTED INDIVIDUALS ARE REQUIRED TO USE A FACE MASK & ARE REQUIRED TO REGISTER UPON ENTRY****

QUESTIONS REGARDING THIS ITB CAN BE MADE TO MR. EPIPHANIO CABRERA, ADMINISTRATOR OF OGM, VIA EMAIL TO epi.cabrera@gov.mp NO LATER THAN THE CLOSE OF BUSINESS **MARCH 10, 2021.** ALL QUESTIONS SUBMITTED AFTER THE GIVEN DEADLINE WILL **NOT** BE ENTERTAINED. QUESTIONS/AMSWERS SHALL BE SHARED WITH ALL BIDDERS.

THE PROVISIONS OF THE CNMI PROCUREMENT REGULATIONS, NMIAC SECTION 70-30.3-725 AND 70-30.3-730 PROHIBITING GRATUITIES, KICKBACKS AND CONTINGENT FEES SHALL APPLY.

THE CNMI GOVERNMENT RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY OR ALL BIDS, OR PORTIONS THEREOF, AND WAIVE IMMATERIAL DEFECTS IF TO DO SO WOULD BE IN THE BEST INTEREST OF THE CNMI GOVERNMENT.

/S EPIPHANIO E. CABRERA, JR.
ADMINISTRATOR, OFFICE OF GRANTS

/S/ FRANCISCO C. AGUON
ACTING DIRECTOR, PS.

DIVISION OF PROCUREMENT SERVICES
CNMI GOVERNMENT

INVITATION TO BID
ITB NO.: ITB21-OGM/MOR-048

SUBMISSION DATE: MARCH 18, 2021 • TIME: 10:30 A.M.

"PURCHASE OF ONE (1) FOUR-IN-ONE MOBILE CRUSHER FOR THE MUNICIPALITY OF ROTA UNDER THE OFFICE OF GRANTS MANAGEMENT & STATE CLEARINGHOUSE"

COPIES OF THE SPECIFICATIONS MAY BE OBTAINED AT THE OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR OF PROCUREMENT SERVICES, LOCATED AT THE FORMER EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT OFFICE, ASCENCION DRIVE, BUILDING NO. 1301, CAPITOL HILL, SAIPAN, DURING REGULAR WORKING HOURS.

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/S/ EPIPHANIO E. CABRERA, JR.
ADMINISTRATOR, OFFICE OF GRANTS

/S/ FRANCISCO C. AGUON
ACTING DIRECTOR, PS.

Commonwealth Zoning Board Meeting
Wednesday, March 3, 2021 | 5:00 PM
Governor Pedro P. Tenorio Multipurpose Center | Susupe
Tel: 234-9661/2 • Fax: 234-9666
www.cnmizoning.com

AGENDA

A. Preliminary Matters
1. Call to Order
2. Roll Call
3. Adoption of Agenda
4. Adoption of 02/03/2021 Zoning Board Meeting minutes
5. Public Comments *(not for items to be discussed in item B. Public Hearings)*

B. Public Hearings:
1. Conditional Use Application #2020-4506 – Marians Hemp Farms is proposing to utilize 5 (Five) Cargo Containers, 2 (Two) 20 foot and 3 (Three) 40 foot, to construct a 1-storey building structure measuring 43'.7" (L) x 208'.10" (W) for its Cannabis Farm Use. This site is located on Lot No. 103 D 06 in the Village of Gualo Rai. This area is zoned as Rural zoning district.

C. New Business
1. Operations Reports (Permitting & Enforcement)

D. Miscellaneous
1. Next Meeting – April 7th
2. Other Matters

E. Adjournment

In an effort to provide public access to this meeting during this pandemic, the Commonwealth Zoning Board will host this meeting via:

Zoom Video Communications
Meeting Link:
https://zoom.us/j/6853007492?pwd=Q0daYlNPMDdXdFlQRTQ4UkhFRjViUT09
Meeting Code: 685 300 7492

TO AVOID TERMINATION OF 180 EMPLOYEES

Lawmaker asks Civil Service Commission to amend the reduction-in-force policy

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Sen. Teresita A. Santos (Ind-Rota) has requested the Civil Service Commission to amend the reduction-in-force policy to prevent the job termination of 180 furloughed employees.

In her letter to CSC chair Jake Maratita last Wednesday, Santos said the reduction-in-force policy would further devastate economic conditions of many families in the Commonwealth.

While she understands the position taken by the administration of Gov. Ralph DLG Torres, the senator said the government must step back and consider other alternatives because the current reduced work hours and the unrecalled furloughed employees alone have resulted in great financial hardships to many families.

As an alternative, she asked Maratita to look at the NMI Administrative Code Section 10-20.2-267 (a) that states that "The Personnel Officer may use furloughs for more than 30 days if there is reasonable assurance that the [furloughed] employees will be returned to duty within the next 12 months."

Santos said the code should be amended to change "12 months" to "24 months."

"In extending the furlough duration, it gives the Commonwealth time to maintain its workers, revive its economic conditions by implementing economic alternatives, and time for the federal government's assistance to get to the Commonwealth," she said.

The senator asked CSC to expedite action on this concern.

In his recent letter to Senate President Jude U. Hofschneider (R-Tinian) and House Speaker Edmund S. Villagomez (R-Saipan), Torres said it would require $5,688,239 in fiscal year 2021 to fully fund the 180 furloughed employees so that they may be called back to their posts.

Torres noted that the one year since the employees were furloughed is coming to the end and, due to the economic conditions, the administration finds it necessary to initiate reduction-in-force procedures.

Santos noted that the Biden administration is new and aggressively pushing legislations to assist people who were laid off, furloughed, or working under reduced hours.

She said Delegate Gregorio Kilili Camacho Sablan (Ind-MP) recently disclosed that appropriate amendments were made to the Reconciliation Bill that would provide $160 million for K-12 education, the Northern Marianas College is expected to get twice what is received a few months ago, and more importantly, the Torres administration should receive $500 million.

Furthermore, Santos said, H.R. 836, the Employment Services and Jobs Parity Act amends the Wagner-Peyser Act to include the Marianas.

The senator said the positive developments in the Capitol and President Joe R. Biden's acknowledgment that the pandemic negatively impacted not only the states but also the U.S. territories and the CNMI, gives the Commonwealth hope that help is coming.

At the same time, she said, the CNMI government must help so that families are not further impacted by imposing further reduction in work hours, further furloughs, and most, especially, imposing reduction-in-force.

Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
NORTHERN MARIANAS HOUSING CORPORATION
P.O. BOX 500514, Saipan, MP 96950-0514
Email: nmhc@nmhc.gov.mp • Website: http://www.nmhcgov.net

EQUAL HOUSING OPPORTUNITY

PUBLIC NOTICE

(This Notice is paid by NMHC with HUD Funds)
February 25, 2021

Governor Ralph DLG. Torres and Lt Arnold I. Palacios, and the Northern Marianas Housing Corporation (NMHC) Board of Directors, through its Chairwoman, Ms. Marcie M. Tomokane, wish to announce that its Consolidated Annual Performance Report (CAPER) for Program Year 2019 is available for review. Comments made by the general public should be submitted no later than 4:30 p.m. on Tuesday, March 2, 2021. Written comments must be submitted to the NMHC Office in Garapan, Saipan, P. O. Box 500514, Saipan, MP 96950, or by contacting Ms. Zenie P. Mafnas, Deputy Corporate Director, at 234-9447/7689.

The report will be submitted to the U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), Honolulu Office, on or before March 15, 2021. The CAPER encompasses the performance assessment of all HUD-funded programs, administered by the Northern Marianas Housing Corporation, in the Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas Islands.

The report is available on NMHC's website at www.nmhcgov.net and at the NMHC Central Office in Saipan and at the respective NMHC Field Offices in Rota and Tinian during regular business hours, Monday through Friday, except CNMI holidays. Individuals needing special accommodations to review and comment on the plan must contact the Planning Division for arrangements by calling (670) 234-7689/6866 during regular business hours.

/s/ Marcie M. Tomokane
Chairwoman of the Board

Commonwealth Utilities Corporation
Office of the Executive Director

INVITATION FOR BIDS
CUC-IFB-21-017

CNMI STREETLIGHT EFFICIENCY PROJECT

The Office of the Executive Director for the Commonwealth Utilities Corporation (CUC) is soliciting competitive sealed bids for the supply and delivery of Light Emitting Diode (LED) streetlight luminaires to promote energy and cost saving measures on the power distribution system in Saipan and Rota, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

This project is funded from the United states Department of the Interior (USDOIA).

Prospective Bidders must pre-register with the CUC Procurement & Supply Division. The Bid Package may be obtained from the CUC Procurement and Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, Saipan, between 7:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, except on government observed holidays, upon completion of registration and presentation of a receipt evidencing a non-refundable payment to the CUC Treasury Section, by cash, check or credit card in the amount of $100.00 (non-refundable) for one IFB package set.

One (1) original and Five (5) hard copies must be submitted in a sealed envelope marked *"CUC-IFB-21-017, CNMI Streetlight Efficiency Project)"* to the CUC Procurement & Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, P.O. Box 501220, Saipan, MP 96950, **no later than 10:00 AM (ChST) on March 4, 2021** at which time they will be publicly opened and read aloud. Bids mailed via postal or courier service must be received on or before due date and time or post-marked before submission deadline. Late submissions and conditional offers will not be considered.

A Bid Guarantee of not less than fifteen (15%) of the total bid price shall accompany the bids. The security deposit may be in cash, certified check, cashier's check, or bid bond executed by a surety company holding a certificate of authority from the United States Secretary of Treasury as an acceptable surety or other surety acceptable to the Attorney General.

All insurers' questions, concerns and qualification should be handled by the Department of Commerce Office of the Insurance Commissioner (OIC). The OIC is tasked with regulating and monitoring compliance to the CNMI's Insurance Code (Title 4, Division 7). *Bidders are required to submit a clearance from the OIC certifying their insurer of choice is in compliance with the CNMI's Insurance Code.*

All bidders are advised that CUC assumes no responsibility in any act of omission on the part of the bidders due to lack of information or understanding of the bid requirements in the course of Contractor's preparation of a bid or supply under the contract. The IFB does not commit CUC to award a contract, to pay any cost incurred in the preparation of the bid under this request, or to procure or contract for goods. This bid and the ensuing contract shall be executed as per the CUC Procurement Regulations.

Questions or requests for clarification will be entertained only from registered Proponents and must be submitted in writing **no later than 10:00 AM (ChST) on February 10, 2021** to Manny B. Sablan, CUC Purchasing Administrator, via email manny.sablan@cucgov.org with a copy to Adrian Reyes, CUC Power Division Engineer via email adrian.reyes@cucgov.org; Alfred Palattao, CUC Power Division Engineer via email alfred.palattao@cucgov.org and Marcela Tenorio, Administrative Technician Senior via email marcela.tenorio@cucgov.org.

CUC reserves the right to reject any or all bids and waive any non-material imperfection in the bid proposal if in its sole opinion to do so would be in the best interest of CUC. All bids shall become the property of CUC.

GARY P. CAMACHO
Executive Director

MANNY BOYER SABLAN
Purchasing Administrator

Commonwealth Utilities Corporation
Office of the Executive Director

REQUEST FOR ARCHITECTURAL AND ENGINEERING SERVICES
CUC-RAES-21-010

A&E Design Services for the Agingan Wastewater Treatment Upgrade (S18-065a)

The Office of the Executive Director, Commonwealth Utilities Corporation (CUC) is soliciting competitive sealed proposals from qualified Architectural and Engineering (A&E) firms for the Design Services of the Agingan Wastewater Treatment Plant Upgrade in Agingan, Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

This project is funded by a grant from the United States of Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA). The award of this project is contingent upon receipt of the approval for project award from USEPA.

Prospective Proposers for this project must pre-register with the CUC Procurement & Supply Division. The RAES package may be obtained from the CUC Procurement and Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, Saipan, between 7:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, except on government observed holidays upon completion of registration and presentation of a receipt evidencing a non-refundable payment to the CUC Treasury Section, by cash, check or credit card in the amount of $100.00 for one package set.

One (1) original and Five (5) hard copies of the Proposal and One (1) original and Five (5) hard copies of the Cost Proposal in a separate envelope must be submitted in a sealed envelope marked **"CUC-RAES-21-010, A&E Design Services for Agingan Wastewater Treatment Plant Upgrade"**, to the CUC Procurement & Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, P.O. Box 501220, Saipan, MP 96950, no later than **10:00 AM (ChST) on March 11, 2021. Late submissions and conditional proposals will not be considered.**

Discussions may be conducted with responsible proposers who submit proposal determined to be reasonably susceptible of being selected for award for the purpose of clarification and to ensure full understanding of and responsiveness to solicitation requirements. All proposers shall be accorded fair and equal treatment with respect to any opportunity for discussion. During discussions, there will be no disclosure of any information derived from the proposal submitted by competing proposers.

All proposers are advised that CUC assumes no responsibility in any act of omission on the part of the proposers due to lack of information or understanding of the proposal requirements in the course of Consultant's preparation of a proposal under the contract. The RAES does not commit CUC to award a contract, to pay any cost incurred in the preparation of the statement of qualifications under this request, or to procure or contract for services. Consultants are required to comply with all CNMI and applicable Federal Laws. This RAES and the ensuing contract shall be executed as per the CUC Procurement Regulations.

All questions or requests for clarification will be entertained only from pre-registered prospective proposers and must be submitted in writing no later than **10:00 AM (ChST) on February 22, 2021** to Mr. Manny B. Sablan, CUC Purchasing Administrator, via email – manny.sablan@cucgov.org with a copy to Mr. Larry Manacop, CUC Water/Wastewater, Acting Chief Engineer – via email larry.manacop@cucgov.org; Westen Knudsen, Water/Wastewater Engineer – via email westen.knudsen@cucgov.org and Ms. Christie L. Sablan, Administrative Technician Senior – via email christie.sablan@cucgov.org.

CUC reserves the right to reject any or all proposals and waive any imperfection in the proposal in the best interest of the government. All proposals shall become the property of CUC.

GARY P. CAMACHO
Executive Director

MANNY B. SABLAN
Purchasing Administrator

Opinion

Hafa Adai!
Saipan Tribune
THE CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER
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The Associated Press | Pacific Islands News Association

EDITORIAL

The price of underestimating COVID: 500,000 dead

In late March 2020, two of the federal government's top health experts, Drs. Anthony Fauci and Deborah Birx, delivered a stark assessment about the potential for catastrophic loss of life in the U.S. from COVID-19. Even with lockdowns and social distancing, they warned during a public briefing of the coronavirus task force, between 100,000 and 240,000 people may die before the virus waned or was vanquished.

It was an eye-popping number at the time—there had been only about a dozen reported COVID deaths on U.S. soil, and the president had dismissed the coronavirus as nothing more serious than seasonal influenza. The announcement seemed hyperbolic and perhaps calculated to shock a still-complacent public into accepting that business and school closures were truly necessary. Surely, the worst-case scenario of a quarter a million people dead was unlikely in such a scientifically and medically advanced nation. Surely.

This was just one way that Americans underestimated the virus, and it wasn't the last. And the cost turned out to be much higher than most Americans could have even imagined.

This week, the official U.S. death toll for COVID-19 surpassed a half a million people—more than any other country—and is still rising every day, though happily at a slower pace than last month.

It's a staggering loss of life by any measure; 500,000 deaths is the equivalent of the entire city of Miami wiped out, plus a good chunk of neighboring Miami Beach. It's also probably an undercount, given the documented underreporting of COVID deaths in several jurisdictions.

One sobering measure of the pandemic's toll is that U.S. life expectancy fell by a full year in the first half of 2020, from 78.8 years to 77.8 years—and worse still for Black and Latino Americans. Such a precipitous drop is unusual, though average lifespans had been decreasing slightly in the preceding years due to the surge in opioid-related deaths. And the figure may rebound next year, after most Americans are vaccinated. But that's another thing we can't predict. One of the perplexing aspects of the virus is how it appears to continue causing health problems months later for those who recovered from their initial infection.

President Joe Biden on Monday ordered flags to be flown at half-staff on federal land in honor of those who died from COVID-19, then spoke at a candle-lighting ceremony Monday night. It's appropriate to remember the dead at tragic milestones such as this one to keep from normalizing the loss and forgetting why all those tiring pandemic precautions are still necessary.

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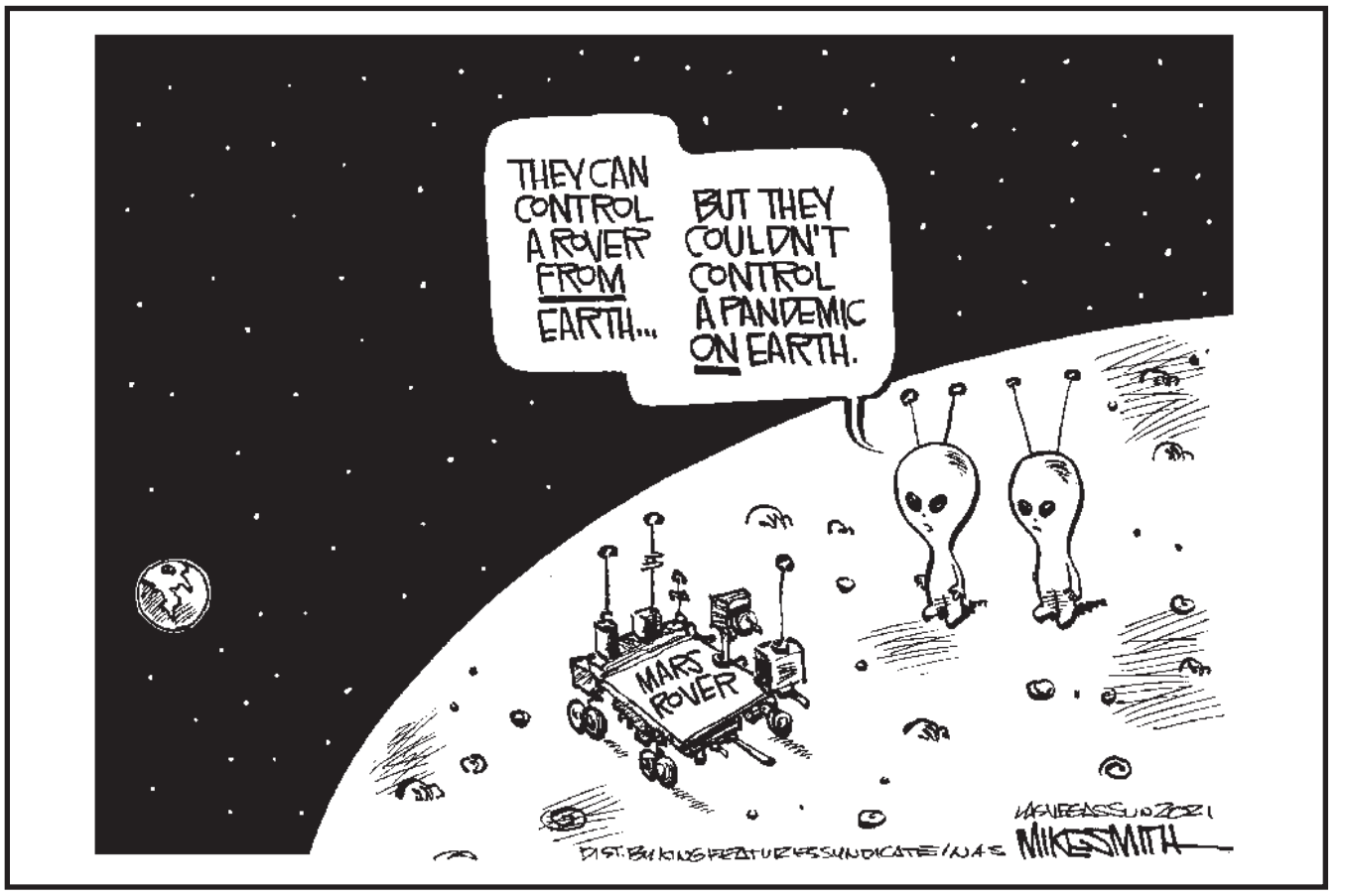


The horrific attacks on Asian American elders cannot lead us to the same old solutions

By NAOMI ISHISAKA
The Seattle Times

Naomi Ishisaka is The Seattle Times' *assistant managing editor for diversity, inclusion and staff development. Email: nishisaka@seattletimes.com; Twitter: @naomiishisaka.*

The videos are horrifying to watch.

Asian American elders—the very people we are taught to most respect and protect—shoved to the ground, with cavalier cruelty.

Over the past few weeks, a spate of attacks on Asian American elders across the country led to desperate calls for the wider public to pay attention. One San Francisco man, 84, was violently pushed to the ground and later died. Another man, 91, was brutally attacked in Oakland, California. On Feb. 17 in New York City alone, three Asian American women over 50 were attacked in three separate incidents.

Feeling that there was "very little being done" to address the violence, actors Daniel Wu and Daniel Dae Kim put up a $25,000 reward to find the suspect who was believed to have attacked three Asian Americans in Oakland's Chinatown.

This latest string of assaults comes a year after the coronavirus hit the U.S. and Asian Americans were targeted by xenophobic and racist attacks fueled by political rhetoric from people like our former president who called COVID-19 the "China virus" and "kung flu."

In just an eight-week period between March and May 2020, the United Nations reported more than 1,800 racist incidents against Asian Americans.

It's hard to watch the attacks on the most vulnerable members of our community and not be filled with a visceral feeling of rage and a desire for retribution.

In response, many have called for a get-tough approach, including demanding an increased police presence in U.S. Chinatowns and advocating for enhanced hate crimes sentencing.

I can understand the desire to reach for seemingly simple, law-and-order solutions to punish those who cause such harm and trauma to an entire community. Hate and bias crimes are often underreported and for a group that often feels invisible, harsh sentences and recognition of racial targeting seem like important validation.

But as tempting as it is to see these attacks as clear-cut examples of anti-Asian xenophobia, the messy truth requires us to complicate the narrative.

As journalists Momo Chang and Darwin BondGraham illustrated in their excellent two-part series in The Oaklandside, the Bay Area cases defy easy definition.

The suspect arrested in the three Oakland attacks, Yahya Muslim, 28, had numerous prior arrests for assault with no apparent pattern of targeting Asian Americans. Muslim, who is African American, was described by a judge six years ago as having "significant mental health issues" and was placed on a psychiatric hold after the attacks.

In the killing of the 84-year-old San Francisco man, Vicha Ratanapakdee, the suspect arrested in his death was also African American, and Ratanapakdee's family said the attack was "driven by hate." But so far, it's unclear what motivated the killing.

There's a long and ugly history of Asian Americans being used as a wedge to reinforce white supremacist beliefs and drive anti-Black racism, and we must be careful and vigilant to ensure we don't again fall victim to assumptions and knee-jerk reactions. Attacks like these force us to put to the test the summer's racial justice rhetoric around Black-Asian solidarity and our actual commitment to moving away from a reliance on policing as an easy solution to entrenched social problems.

A growing Asian American-led, nationwide multiracial coalition released a statement last week to push back against the drive for more criminalization and incarceration as solutions to these complex issues.

The organizations called for a deeper examination of what actually creates community safety.

"True justice must go beyond repairing the hurt. It must address the root cause of what caused the violence to begin with, and address what's needed to bring healing and build relationships within communities," said Aarti Kohli, executive director of Asian Americans Advancing Justice—Asian Law Caucus in a statement. "As organizations committed to advancing this bigger vision of justice and dismantling racism, we saw a clear need to reject calls for more law enforcement and punitive measures that only serve to deepen inequities and perpetuate more violence."

We can't achieve true public safety when economic opportunity, housing, education, health care and mental health support are not available to all. We can't achieve public safety when huge swaths of people are trying to survive our destructive system of mass incarceration and struggling under the weight of racial oppression themselves.

Until we address foundational issues and continue to invest in cross-racial community building, we can't be surprised when the byproducts of our unjust systems emerge in the worst ways, as we are seeing now.

Slow, systemic change doesn't lend itself well to a celebrity endorsement or a trending hashtag, but it's where those who are closest to the communities themselves know the work needs to be done for true change to be made.

Communicating the reality and magnitude of 500,000 COVID-19 deaths

By DAVID ZURAWIK
The Baltimore Sun

David Zurawik is The Baltimore Sun*'s media critic. Email: david.zurawik@baltsun.com; Twitter: @davidzurawik.*

During the first few months of the COVID-19 crisis last year, I thought media was doing a poor job of humanizing the tremendous fear, pain and loss Americans were suffering from COVID-19. But by April, camera crews were making their way into emergency rooms and pandemic wards to show us the horror that we had mostly only been told about by front-line medical workers and people sitting at anchor desks. A CNN report by Miguel Marquez in late March that showed us a hellish landscape of horribly sick patients on gurneys in a hospital's crowded hallways coughing and gasping for breath was the breakthrough report. I hailed it hoping that seeing would be believing for most viewers.

And yet with a president saying at the time how he wanted the economy back up by Easter and exclaiming how "beautiful" it would be to have "packed churches" for that Sunday, millions continued to ignore masks and social distancing and party straight into Memorial Day and the Fourth of July. Remember those beach scenes of people drinking, dancing and standing face to face inches apart with no masks?

As we surpassed the mind-boggling milestone of 500,000 deaths this week, I have been asking myself why some people still don't seem to get the horror of where we are with this pandemic even today as others scramble desperately to get a vaccination. Are the media to blame? If so, how? That's the column I thought I would be writing for today.

Some in the right-wing media are to blame. Remember Fox News senior political analyst Brit Hume mocking then-presidential-candidate Joe Biden on Twitter in May for wearing a mask— mockery that Trump, who did not wear a mask in public events at the time, then shared with millions? COVID had already killed 97,000 Americans, but wearing a mask was still apparently a laughing matter to some in right-wing media and Trump.

Fox, One America News Network and Newsmax do share blame for spreading the former president's misinformation, disinformation and lies about the pandemic. If you want to blame the media for the inability or unwillingness by some Americans to get their heads around this horror, you can certainly blame the right-wing media all you want.

But that is not true of most of the mainstream media, which not only tried to report one of the biggest and most challenging stories of the last 100 years, but also to sort out some of the confusion Trump generated on an almost daily basis when he was using press sessions at the White House podium as a substitute for campaign rallies. Remember Trump sharing his crackpot speculation about injecting a disinfectant into our bodies to kill the virus?

But CNN, MSNBC, PBS and the commercial networks of NBC, CBS and ABC have been all in on reporting COVID. The "Frontline" series on PBS has done outstanding documentaries not just on the impact of the disease in terms of hospitalizations and deaths. In "COVID's Hidden Toll," it looked at how the virus was affecting workers in the fields and packing houses of California who work without safety protections and live in a constant state of dread. In "Growing Up Poor in America," "Frontline" looked at the special hardships COVID inflicted on those who were already struggling economically before the pandemic hit, such as families whose children didn't have a computer or the internet connections necessary to continue their educations when schools closed.

The strong coverage isn't only at the national level. The Sun has a page one story and a variety of other reports on COVID virtually every day online and in the print edition. And the reports are not just handout and press conference journalism in which the governor or mayor announces something and it makes it straight into the paper or online without further reporting or context. A story Monday about Maryland Gov. Larry Hogan announcing vaccinations at M&T Bank Stadium in Baltimore quoted him hailing it as a "another milestone toward ending this pandemic," but it also reported that the website was immediately overwhelmed and unable to book appointments.

The mainstream media is doing its job. If you cannot get your head around the enormity of 500,000 dead from this virus and the lethal possibility of that figure ultimately including you and someone you love, that's on you. Don't blame the mainstream media if you are getting your COVID analysis from Fox's Sean Hannity instead of CNN's Dr. Sanjay Gupta. Try making better media choices.

Use of algorithms can perpetuate bias

By VINHCENT LE
Progressive Media Project

Vinhcent Le is technology equity legal counsel at The Greenlining Institute. This column was produced for the Progressive Media Project, which is run by The Progressive *magazine, and distributed by Tribune News Service.*

For most of us, the word "algorithm" is fairly new to our vocabulary. But badly designed decision-making algorithms have a growing impact on our lives and can do a great deal of damage.

Simply put, an algorithm is a set of instructions used by computer systems to perform a task or make a decision. On social media platforms, for example, algorithms decide what ads appear based on what content a user looks at, likes or shares.

As we discovered in a new Greenlining Institute report on algorithmic bias, these algorithms may be used to decide everything from whether someone gets a job interview or mortgage, to how heavily one's neighborhood is policed.

"Poorly designed algorithms," we wrote, "threaten to amplify systemic racism by reproducing patterns of discrimination and bias that are found in the data algorithms use to learn and make decisions."

Algorithms can be put to good use, such as helping manage responses to the COVID-19 pandemic, but things can also go seriously wrong. Sometimes, algorithms replicate the conscious or unconscious biases of the humans who designed them, disadvantaging whole groups of people, often without them even knowing it's happening.

Like humans, algorithms "learn"—in the latter case through what's called training data, which teaches the algorithm to look for patterns in bits of information. That's where things can start to go wrong.

Consider a bank whose historical lending data shows that it routinely gave higher interest rates to people in a ZIP code with a majority of Black residents. An algorithm trained on that biased data could learn to overcharge residents in that area.

In 2014, Amazon tried to develop a recruiting algorithm to rate the resumes of job candidates and predict who would do well. But, even though gender was not intended as a factor in the algorithm, it still favored men and penalized resumes that included the names of all-women's colleges. This likely happened because Amazon had a poor record of hiring and promoting women, causing the training data used for the algorithm to repeat the pattern.

Happily, Amazon's researchers caught the problem and, when they found they couldn't fix it, scrapped the algorithm. But how many such situations have gone unnoticed and uncorrected? No one knows.

Worse, our laws have not caught up with this new, insidious form of discrimination. While both federal and state governments have anti-discrimination laws, they're ineffective in this situation, since most were written before the internet was even invented. And proving algorithmic bias is difficult since the people being discriminated against may not know why or how the decision that harmed them was made.

Our anti-discrimination laws must be updated to properly regulate algorithmic bias and discrimination, with provisions to promote transparency. California's legislature is leading the way by considering legislation that would bring more transparency and accountability to algorithms used in government programs.

Government at all levels should pay much more attention to this new, insidious form of discrimination.

Are we, as people, better or worse for COVID-19?

By JACOB M. APPEL
The Baltimore Sun

Jacob M. Appel is director of Ethics Education in Psychiatry at the Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai. He is the author of Who Says You're Dead? *a collection of ethical conundrums. Email: jacob.appel@mssm.edu.*

When I deliver lectures on pandemic ethics over Zoom—part of my job as a bioethicist—one of the questions I am asked with increasing frequency is whether I believe there will be any silver linings to COVID-19. I usually respond with dark humor, a quip that I am grateful my barber now wears an N95 mask, so I can avoid small talk while he cuts my hair. Answering this question more seriously, in a manner that respects the deaths of half a million Americans, proves challenging: I do not wish to sound like a benighted Pollyanna who praises World War II for giving us the Slinky.

One does not need to be clairvoyant to recognize that the current pandemic may lead to significant changes—some for the better—in the way that we live and work. For example, the mRNA technology ramped up for COVID-19 vaccines may also prove beneficial in treating autoimmune diseases like multiple sclerosis. The era of the transcontinental business trip is probably over, which may not please airlines, but is a relief for anyone who has ever spent 10 hours in transit to deliver a 30-minute presentation on the opposite coast. In the loss column, chalk up "snow days" and self-service buffet tables.

But what if we are asking the wrong question? Rather than reflecting on how the COVID-19 pandemic will change society, we might want to reflect on how it might change us. Will a year of social isolation and economic distress make us better or worse human beings? When we return to the proverbial "new normal," will we enter the world with appreciation for the fragility of life and the welfare of our neighbors? Will we donate more blood? Increase our charitable donations? Look in on our elderly neighbors with greater frequency? Or will our tribal instincts have rendered us more selfish and suspicious—a nation of xenophobic hermits who emerge periodically to brawl over toilet paper?

According to social scientists, minor changes in surroundings or experience can have significant impacts on human judgment and behavior. Locating polling places inside schools, for instance, makes voters more likely to support education funding. People opt for worse financial decisions when they are hungry. Even the time of day and the weather matters. Studies have shown that people are more likely to behave ethically in the morning than in the afternoon and that medical school interviewers rank applicants lower on rainy days. Needless to say, the scope of the current crisis is bound to have an impact many magnitudes greater.

One does not need to be an expert, of course, to recognize the impact of significant historical events of the behavior of those who live through them. Generational cohorts give birth to generational stereotypes, some true. My own grandfather, an adolescent of the Great Depression, tore napkins in half into his 80s to save pennies. Increasingly, data show that historic calamities shape not only the behavior of survivors—but also their offspring. Researchers at Milan's Bocconi University have analyzed survey data to show that the 1918 flu pandemic increased distrust among the children of survivors. Evidence from major earthquakes suggests that a poor government response to disaster exacerbates a decline in interpersonal trust.

Social science, of course, is not destiny. Our civil institutions and political leaders can still unite us—but history suggests their challenge will be harder going forward. The first step is asking the right question. To paraphrase President John F. Kennedy: Rather than wonder how the pandemic will generate technological and lifestyle windfalls for ourselves, we must ask what lessons from the pandemic we can harness to help others. Whether we are better or worse for COVID-19 is, at least in part, a verdict within our control.

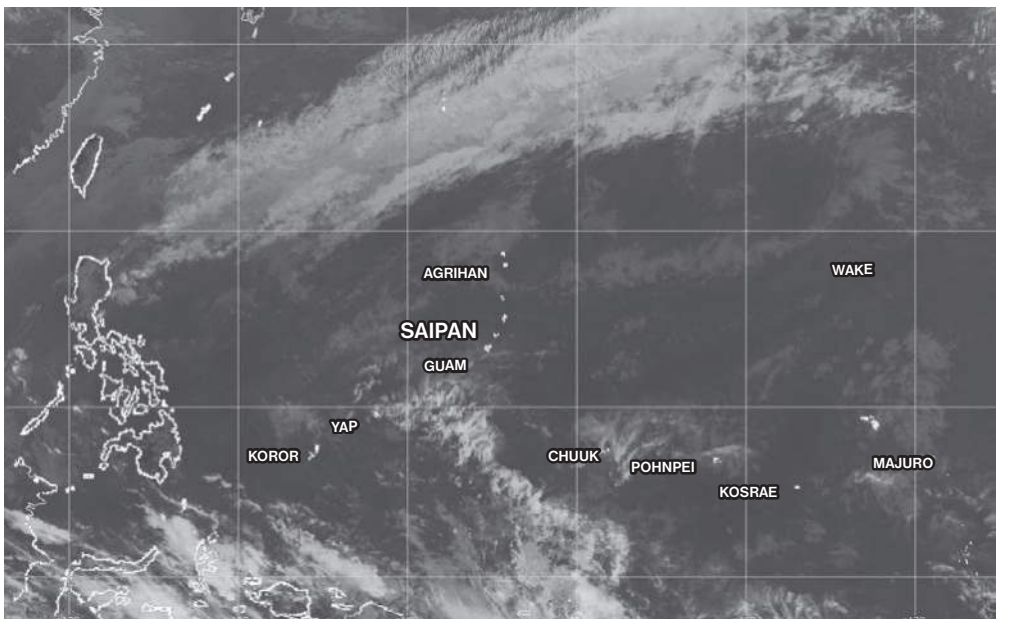
We're all facing a whole lot more unknowns than ever before. If all of that has taken a toll on your mental health, you're not alone.

The Weather

5-DAY FORECAST FOR SAIPAN AND TINIAN

TODAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY	MONDAY
Partly cloudy with isolated showers. East winds 15 to 20 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers. East winds 15 to 20 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated light showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated light showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated light showers.
86° 76°	87° 77°	87° 77°	87° 77°	87° 77°

YESTERDAY'S SATELLITE IMAGE



PICTURE TIME: 5:42 AM, WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 2021

Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

Another dry morning across the Marianas, with partly cloudy skies, isolated light showers, and moderate trade winds. At the buoys, combined seas are indicated at around 5 feet.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

MICRONESIA	▲ ▼ °F	
Guam and Rota	Showers	83° / 76°
Palau	Thunderstorm	84° / 77°
Yap	Thunderstorm	84° / 79°
Chuuk	Showers	85° / 80°
Pohnpei	Showers	84° / 78°
Kosrae	Thunderstorm	84° / 80°
Majuro	Thunderstorm	83° / 80°

DAY	SUNRISE	SUNSET
Today	6:36 AM	6:23 PM
Friday	6:36 AM	6:23 PM
Saturday	6:35 AM	6:24 PM
Sunday	6:34 AM	6:24 PM
Monday	6:34 AM	6:24 PM

DAY	MOONRISE	MOONSET	MOONRISE
Today	-	4:50 AM	4:26 PM
Friday	-	5:41 AM	5:25 PM
Saturday	-	6:28 AM	6:24 PM
Sunday	-	7:14 AM	7:22 PM
Monday	-	7:58 AM	8:20 PM

AROUND THE GLOBE	▲ ▼ °F	
Auckland	Sunny	75° / 61°
Beijing	Mostly Sunny	45° / 27°
Hong Kong	Mostly Cloudy	72° / 64°
Honolulu	Partly Cloudy	81° / 64°
London	Showers	48° / 39°
Los Angeles	Cloudy	65° / 52°
Manila	Partly Cloudy	88° / 72°
Melbourne	Sunny	93° / 63°
Miami	Partly Cloudy	78° / 66°
New York	Partly Cloudy	35° / 22°
Osaka	Sunny	54° / 39°
Paris	Showers	50° / 43°
Pusan	Partly Cloudy	48° / 30°
Rome	Partly Cloudy	61° / 50°
Salem	Partly Cloudy	69° / 47°
San Francisco	Cloudy	42° / 22°
Seoul	Partly Cloudy	43° / 23°
Tokyo	Sunny	55° / 36°
Washington, DC	Mostly Cloudy	44° / 29°

TIDES: SAIPAN HARBOR TODAY	FEET	
12:17 AM	Low Tide	-0.30
7:33 AM	High Tide	1.68
12:48 PM	Low Tide	1.05
5:44 PM	High Tide	1.70

STOP THE SPREAD

The Governor's COVID-19 Task Force and Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. continue to encourage residents within the Marianas to practice social distancing, which means avoiding close contact with people in order to avoid catching the virus yourself and to avoid passing it on to others.

- Stay home as much as possible. Avoid unnecessary travel or public places.
- Avoid social gatherings in groups of more than 10.
- Choose drive-thru, take-out, or delivery options, or outdoor seating, if available, when dining in.
- Send only one healthy adult from the household run necessary errands, such as getting groceries or picking up medications. Leave children, elderly, and other vulnerable people at home as much as possible. When returning home from an errand, wash your hands before doing anything else.
- Older adults and people with chronic medical conditions are at higher risk of getting very sick from this illness. People at high risk should stay at home as much as possible.
- Create a household plan of action, https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prepare/checklisthousehold-ready.html
- Ensure a 30-day supply of all medicines.

Continue good hand hygiene

- Wash your hands for at least 20 seconds with soap and water, avoid touching your face, cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue or your sleeve.
- Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer if soap and water are not readily available.

Know the signs and symptoms of COVID-19 and what to do if you become symptomatic

- Stay home when you are sick and if you recently traveled to a place with COVID-19. Self-quarantine means:
- ❑ Choosing a room in your house that can be used to separate sick household members from others.
- ❑ Washing your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- ❑ Avoiding touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- ❑ Limiting visitors

CHCC appreciates the patience and understanding of the community at this time. To obtain general information about the CNMI COVID-19 response, contact the Governor's COVID-19 Task Force Hotline at 287-0046, 287-0489, 287-1089. These numbers are available Monday to Sunday, 7:30am - 4:30pm.

For medical information about COVID-19, reach out to the COVID-19 Infoline at the following numbers: 285-1672/1352. These numbers are available Monday to Friday, 7:30am - 4:30pm.

For mental health support and helpful tips during a crisis, call the Mental Health Support Line at 285-1856, 323-6560, 323-6561 These numbers are available Monday to Friday, 7:30am - 4:30 pm. For the 24/7 Disaster Distress Helpline, call SAMSHA at 1-800-985-5990.

For more information about DIY face coverings, visit https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/cloth-face-cover.html

For more information about CHCC programs, follow CHCC on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter at @cnmichcc, check out our website at www.chcc.gov.mp or call us at (670) 234-8950.

For more information on the Governor's COVID-19 Task Force, visit www.governor.gov.mpand, follow @GovernorCNMI on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter.

This health advisory may be found online at http://www.chcc.gov.mp/pressrelease.html and at www.governor.gov.mp/covid-19.

Rumor control

During crises like this, oftentimes the spread of misinformation is just as dangerous as the virus itself. The CNMI is reminded to only share official and verified notices, press releases, and advisories from the Governor's COVID-19 Task Force and CHCC.

Source: Office of the Governor

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FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF FEBRUARY 1, 2021

DEPARTURES

SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM)

UA117	6:55am	7:35am	1, 6
UA117	7:00am	7:40am	4

SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)

UA117/183	6:55am	9:50pm	1 via Guam

GUAM-MANILA (MNL)

UA183	8:00pm	9:50pm	1, 3, 5

ARRIVALS

GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN

UA174	5:10am	5:51am	1, 6
UA174	5:15am	5:56am	4

MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN

UA184/174	10:55pm	5:56am+1	3 via Guam
UA184/174	10:40pm	5:51am+1	5 via Guam

MANILA (MNL)-GUAM

UA184	10:40pm	4:30am+1	5
UA184	10:55pm	4:40am+1	1, 3

LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); UA United Airlines • ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. *(The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)*

STAR MARIANAS AIR, INC.

FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF JANUARY 9, 2021

SAIPAN TO ROTA

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
1301	8:30AM	9:00AM	Mon/Tues/Wed/Thurs/Fri
1302	11:00AM	11:30AM	Mon/Tues/Wed/Thurs/Fri/Sat
1303	3:30PM	4:00PM	Mon/Tues/Wed/Thurs/Fri/Sun

ROTA TO SAIPAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
3101	9:30AM	10:00AM	Mon/Tues/Wed/Thurs/Fri
3102	12:00AM	12:30AM	Mon/Tues/Wed/Thurs/Fri/Sat
3103	4:30PM	5:00PM	Mon/Tues/Wed/Thurs/Fri/Sun

ROTA TO GUAM

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
3401	12:15	12:45	Temporarily Unavailable

GUAM TO ROTA

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
4301	13:00	13:30	Temporarily Unavailable

SAIPAN TO TINIAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
1201	7:00	7:15	Temporarily Unavailable
1202	8:00	8:15	Daily
1203	9:00	9:15	Daily
1204	10:00	10:15	Daily
1205	11:00	11:15	Temporarily Unavailable
1206	12:00	12:15	Temporarily Unavailable
1207	13:00	13:15	Temporarily Unavailable
1208	14:00	14:15	Daily
1209	15:00	15:15	Daily
1210	16:00	16:15	Daily
1211	17:00	17:15	Daily
1212	17:00	17:15	Temporarily Unavailable

TINIAN TO SAIPAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
2101	7:30	7:45	Temporarily Unavailable
2102	8:30	8:45	Daily
2103	9:30	9:45	Daily
2104	10:30	10:45	Daily
2105	11:30	11:45	Temporarily Unavailable
2106	12:30	12:45	Temporarily Unavailable
2107	13:30	13:45	Temporarily Unavailable
2108	14:30	14:45	Daily
2109	15:30	15:45	Daily
2110	16:30	16:45	Daily
2111	17:30	17:45	Daily
2112	18:30	18:45	Temporarily Unavailable

Tinian High's Keyla Flores graduates in Top 2 of AIT class

Keyla B. Flores, a Tinian Jr./Sr. High School's Class of 2020 graduate, has graduated from Advanced Individual Training in the U.S. military as Top 2 in her class, with the Honor Graduate title.

This comes soon after Flores graduated from her Basic Training last Sept. 10, 2020 at Fort Jackson, South Carolina with Charlie Company 1-61. Flores graduated from AIT training on Dec. 8, 2020, at Fort Lee, Virginia Bravo Company 16th Ordnance.

Her training comes amid the COVID-19 pandemic, which even affected basic training.

"Wearing a mask every day, even when we were marching somewhere, was a challenge. It was hard to breathe in some cases," said Flores. "Then every night we had to get our temperatures checked. We moved from one building to another so often every time cases would pop up. I just pushed through day by day, to be honest. I was already prepared for what I signed up for."

Basic training was cut into four phases because of the coronavirus outbreak. The first phase involved quarantine. "The only hard thing was showering in three minutes," Flores said. "We also did a lot of physical exercises to prepare for the [Army Combat Fitness Test]." Her basic training lasted ten weeks.

Following the completion of basic training was AIT, which took about 13 weeks to complete. Every day during the training, Flores would wake up at 4am to do physical training and went to class in the Ordnance School for Mechanics, completing a new module every week. She also learned how to troubleshoot faults in different vehicles and how to replace parts.

Private First Class Keyla Flores, far left. CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

"Then at the end of AIT, we did a two-mile ruck march and stayed in the field for three nights...troubleshooting vehicles, qualifying our weapons again and... field training," Flores said.

At the end of her AIT, Flores obtained a certificate of achievement for exceptional performance while assigned to Bravo Company, 16th Ordnance.

After graduating from Basic Training and AIT, her first assignment will be at Camp Humphrey, South Korea. After her flight got canceled due to the pandemic, Flores stayed in Fort Lee until she was shipped out on Jan. 11, 2021.

During her time participating in the Tinian Jr./Sr. High School JROTC program, Flores was known as a dedicated, active cadet. Besides being the outgoing Stallion Battalion executive officer during her senior year at TJSHS, she was also in charge of the Unarmed Drill Team. In addition, she held the former positions of S4 clerk, S3 clerk, S1 clerk, and Alpha Company executive officer.

"...I remember this one specific high school breakdown… where I messaged my brother telling him about how I wasn't ready for the real world and how bad I wanted to succeed. ...Among other things, he told me to suck it up and that was the end of the conversation," said Flores. "I joined the military because I wanted to go to college but couldn't afford that and it made me super nervous to start school right after high school… I still have a lot of things to work on to get to where I want to be."

Her advice to cadets? "Success shouldn't be rushed and that everyone is different, you have time, just keep working hard—you'll get to where you want to be." ***(Lloyd Rivera/ Samantha Sandbergen)***

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CNMI GOVERNMENT
INVITATION TO BID
ITB NO.: ITB21-BECQ/DEQ-050
SUBMISSION DATE: MARCH 18, 2021 TIME: 09:30 A.M.

"PURCHASE OF TWO (2) CLASS "I" VEHICLES FOR THE BUREAU OF ENVIRONMENTAL AND COASTAL QUALITY, DIVISION OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY"

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****FOR YOUR SAFTEY & OURS: ALL INTERESTED INDIVIDUALS ARE REQUIRED TO USE A FACE MASK & ARE REQUIRED TO REGISTER UPON ENTRY****

THE PROVISIONS OF THE CNMI PROCUREMENT REGULATIONS, NMIAC SECTION 70-30.3-725 AND 70-30.3-730 PROHIBITING GRATUITIES, KICKBACKS AND CONTINGENT FEES SHALL APPLY.

THE CNMI GOVERNMENT RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY OR ALL BIDS, OR PORTIONS THEREOF, AND WAIVE IMMATERIAL DEFECTS IF TO DO SO WOULD BE IN THE BEST INTEREST OF THE CNMI GOVERNMENT.

/S/ ELI D. CABRERA
ADMINISTRATOR OFBECQ

/S/ FRANCISCO C. AGUON
ACTING DIRECTOR, P&S

DIVISION OF PROCUREMENT SERVICES
CNMI GOVERNMENT
INVITATION TO BID
ITB NO.: ITB21-BECQ/DEQ-047
SUBMISSION DATE: MARCH 18, 2021 TIME: 09:00 A.M.

"PURCHASE OF ONE (1) CLASS "F" PICK-UP TRUCK FOR THE BUREAU OF ENVIRONMENTAL AND COASTAL QUALITY, DIVISION OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY"

COPIES OF THE SPECIFICATIONS MAY BE OBTAINED AT THE OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR OF PROCUREMENT SERVICES, LOCATED AT THE FORMER EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT OFFICE, ASCENCION DRIVE, BUILDING NO. 1301, CAPITOL HILL, SAIPAN, DURING REGULAR WORKING HOURS.

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ACTING DIRECTOR, P&S

Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
Bureau of Environmental and Coastal Quality
Division of Coastal Resources Management
P.O. Box 501304, Saipan, MP 96950
Tel: (670) 664-8300; Fax: (670) 664-8315
www.dcrm.gov.mp

Eliceo D. Cabrera
Administrator

Janice E. Castro
Director, DCRM

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

ROUTE 35 ROAD IMPROVEMENT PROJECT (CHALAN TUN HERMAN PAN-AIRPORT ROAD)
COASTAL PERMIT NO. SMS-2000-X-142-A1

The Division of Coastal Resources Management (DCRM) will be holding a public hearing for the proposed road improvements of the Route 35 also known as the Chalan Tun Herman Pan Road.

The Department of Public Works is proposing to improve the Route 35 (Tun Herman Pan) Road which includes hazard elimination such as inclusion of guardrail, traffic signs and drainage improvements and pavement rehabilitation. Route 35 is a two-lane undivided roadway along the 0.78-mile length beginning from the Route 31 (Chalan Msgr. Guerrero) Road intersection and ending at the intersection of Route 304 (Flame Road).

The public hearing for this project is scheduled to take place on **Thursday, March 11, 2021, at 5:00 PM** in the **BECQ 2nd Floor Conference Room**, on Middle Road in Lower Gualo Rai, Saipan. COVID-19 protocols will be implemented and all participants are required to wear a face mask at all times.

Written comments can be submitted by mail to the Division of Coastal Resources Management, P.O. Box 501304, sent by fax to 664-8315, or emailed to permitting@dcrm.gov.mp. The project files are open and can be reviewed by scheduling an appointment with DCRM. All written and oral comments received by DCRM will be included as part of the permit application records and will be considered in any decisions concerning the proposed projects. Please contact the DCRM at 664-8300/1 if you have any questions or would like to learn more about the Route 35 Road Improvement project.

/s/ JANICE E. CASTRO
Director
Division of Coastal Resources Management

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

Chunyanyin Rivera Petitioner, vs. Victor Norita Rivera Respondent,
FCD-DI-CIVIL ACTION NO. 21-0028 FCD
SUMMONS OR PUBLICATION

TO THE ABOVE-NAMED RESPONDENT:

YOU ARE HEREBY SUMMONED and notified to file any answer you wish to make to the Complaint, a copy of which is on file with the Court, within thirty (30) days after service of the Summons upon you, and to deliver or mail a copy of your answer to the Petitioner whose address is P.O. Box 506492 Saipan, MP 96950 as soon as practical after filing your answer or sending it to the Clerk of Courts for filing.

Your answer should be in writing and filed with the Clerk of this Court at Susupe, Saipan, MP 96950. It may be prepared for you by your counsel and sent to the Clerk of this Court by messenger or Mail. It is not necessary for you to appear personally until further notice. If you fail to file and answer in accordance with this Summons, Judgement by Default may be taken against you for relief in the Complaint.

Dated this 20th day of January, 2021.

/s/ Clerk of Court

PacificRIM
CNMI, LLC.

Career Opportunities

PREMIERE CNMI Construction Company is looking for qualified and committed individuals for the following "Long Term" positions.

- **Superintendent**
- **Foreman**
- **Accounting Assistant**

U.S. Eligible Workers Competitive Salary and Benefits

Interested candidates may email your resumes to esannicolas@pacificrimco.net or call 670.588.7746.

Special Feature

Editor's Note: *The Governor's Council of Economic Advisers' Public Private Partnership initiative has drawn widespread support from the community. Various activities have been conducted and projects have been launched to rally behind the destination transformation campaign. This section will provide insights on how PPP supporters are committed to the program.*

GOVERNOR'S COUNCIL OF ECONOMIC ADVISERS
Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
Together, We Can
Public Private Partnership

MGB PHOTO
Triple J Enterprises, Inc. has adopted the Jones Beach in support of the Public Private Partnership initiative of the Governor's Council of Economic Advisers. Before and after photos below show the transformation Triple J did with the pavilions at the beach park.

TRIPLE J spruces up Jones Beach

Triple J Enterprises is on board the Public Private Partnership campaign of the Governor's Council of Economic Advisers and has chosen to adopt the Jones Beach Park on Tinian.

Triple J became the first company to commit to transforming and maintaining a site on Tinian, deciding to adopt one of the most visited places on the island. The park is located in San Jose village and has five beachside pavilions, an ample parking lot, and big ground that is used for camping and sports and recreational activities. Years of lack of maintenance and extensive damage from typhoons convinced Triple J that the site is in dire need of upgrade and repairs.

The Jones Beach was not only a practical choice for Triple J, but also a sentimental one, as the park was renamed (from Kammer Beach) in honor of the late Kenneth Thomas Jones Jr., the brother of Triple J founding chair and chief executive officer Robert H. Jones who pioneered a cattle ranch and farm on Tinian in the 1960s. The new sign of the beach park bearing Kenneth's last name was recently unveiled, designed by no less than Robert H. Jones.

Triple J assisted the Tinian Mayor's Office and the Department of Public Works in improving Jones Beach: Electrical wiring, panel boxes, and lighting fixtures at all five pavilions were replaced and power and water were restored to the site. The pavilions were also repainted along with the parking lots. Repair work started last Jan. 25 and was completed last Feb. 12 in time for the Pika Festival, when Tinian welcomed hundreds of visitors for the first time since the COVID-19 pandemic struck.

Triple J vice president Mike S. Sablan said that joining the PPP and adopting Jones Beach is their way of thanking the community for supporting the company. Triple J is into auto dealership and car rentals, hotel, restaurants, and retail store operations, and real estate. It recently expanded its business to Tinian with the opening of the Tinian Western Lodge, Bar-K Diner and Drive-in, and Hertz Rent-A-Car office.

"It is Triple J's pleasure to give back to the good people of Tinian. Our sponsorship of Jones Beach is a small gesture of doing so in appreciation of the community's warm support of our business presence on the island," Sablan said.

He added that Triple J will continue to work with the Tinian Mayor's Office to maintain Jones Beach and in future transformation projects for the site. ***(PR)***

Business

$35 round of golf at COR

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Golf enthusiasts can now get the best deal to play golf for only $35 at Coral Ocean Resort from Feb. 17 to March 31.

By BEA CABRERA
beacabrerasaipan@gmail.com
CORRESPONDENT

Book a golf game with family or friends at Coral Ocean Resort Saipan located in Koblerville and enjoy the majestic sights and views while you continue hitting those holes-in-one, birdies, bogies, and pars because starting last week a round of golf is only $35 until the end of March.

According to Sales & Marketing manager Katy Hung, this promotion is their way of giving better service since the golf course re-opened in July. "COR golf course is offering a special promotion called 'Early Bird Promo' that started last Feb. 17 and will run until the end of March. For only $35, golfers can enjoy one round of 18 holes. This rate is available all day every Wednesday and any time before 8am on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday," she said.

"COR golf course operates every day and tee-offs happen every 7 minutes from 7am sharp and last tee off is 12:32pm. To book your desired tee off time anytime and anywhere, people can download the COR app (search 'Coral Ocean Resort') that is available on Apple App Store and Google Play Store and complementary iced coffee awaits the early birds," she added.

At the re-opening of COR last July, Pacific Island Club Saipan general manager Gloria Cavanagh said that COR welcoming golf enthusiast is good for the economy. "We have been rehiring and hiring people and E-Land has been working hard to open to give the people of the CNMI more opportunities. …We have seen the demand for us to open because there were only two golf courses on island," she said. PIC is a sister company of COP.

"Golf is the sport of choice during this time because, aside from promoting health, it is played outdoors, which is extremely safe during a pandemic. It helps too that we do not have community infection and we sure hope it stays that way until we all get out through this and everybody is vaccinated," she added.

Hung said that since they opened, they have had a lot of good and positive feedback from golf enthusiasts "We closed the golf course because of the damage it had after Super Typhoon Yutu. After two years, COR is back and people can again enjoy the course that was designed by World of Golf hall of famer Larry Nelson," she said.

"COR golf course is the only LPGA standard 7,000-yard course with 18 holes on Saipan and it has been missed by golf lovers since its closure in 2018… since this is a special time for golf lovers, we want them to know that COR is here to render that best service and rate because we are here together," she added.

COR also accommodates group reservations. For more information, call (670) 234-7000.

Ardiente, Keiko Borja earn CAMS designations

HAGATNA, Guam—Bank of Guam is proud to announce that Ashley Ardiente and Keiko Borja have successfully passed the Association of Certified Anti-Money Laundering Specialists (ACAMS) examination, and are now fully licensed and certified anti-money laundering specialists. The ACAMS certification is an extremely competitive international licensing, and with the successful completion by Ardiente and Borja, Bank of Guam now has five ACAMS certified bank officers who possess the knowledge and skillset to combat against money laundering and financial crimes.

Ardiente began her career at the Bank of Guam in 2016 as an Anti-Money Laundering (AML) Investigator I and has been promoted throughout the years. She currently holds a position as a Bank Secrecy Act (BSA) AML Officer III. Ardiente is a 2011 graduate of Okkodo High School and has a Bachelor's degree in Business Administration with the concentration in Finance and Economics with the University of Guam.

Ardiente

Borja

Borja became part of the familia at the Bank of Guam since 2010 and has gained a well-rounded experience over the years. Borja started her career in customer service, moved to operations, and then joined the BSA/AML department. Borja held a position as a BSA/AML Officer I and has recently been promoted to a BSA/AML Investigations Manager. Borja is a 2009 graduate of Notre Dame High School.

ACAMS is the largest international membership organization for Anti-Financial Crime professionals which supports individuals and organizations who are dedicated to ending financial crime through thought leadership, continuing professional education and their "best-in-class" peer network. CAMS certification is the global gold standard in Advanced Money Laundering (AML) certifications by institutions, governments and regulators worldwide. ***(PR)***

Nation

Defenders blame missed intel in breach of Capitol

WASHINGTON (AP)—Missed intelligence was to blame for the outmanned Capitol defenders' failure to anticipate the violent mob that invaded the iconic building and halted certification of the presidential election on Jan. 6, the officials who were in charge of security that day said Tuesday in their first public testimony on the insurrection.

The officials, including the former chief of the Capitol Police, pointed their fingers at various federal agencies—and each other—for their failure to defend the building as supporters of then-President Donald Trump overwhelmed security barriers, broke windows and doors and sent lawmakers fleeing from the House and Senate chambers. Five people died as a result of the riot, including a Capitol Police officer and a woman who was shot as she tried to enter the House chamber with lawmakers still inside.

Former Capitol Police Chief Steven Sund, who resigned under pressure immediately after the attack, and the other officials said they had expected the protests to be similar to two pro-Trump events in late 2020 that were far less violent. Sund said he hadn't seen an FBI field office report that warned of potential violence citing online posts about a "war."

Sund described a scene as the mob arrived at the perimeter that was "like nothing" he had seen in his 30 years of policing and argued that the insurrection was not the result of poor planning by Capitol Police but of failures across the board.

"No single civilian law enforcement agency – and certainly not the USCP – is trained and equipped to repel, without significant military or other law enforcement assistance, an insurrection of thousands of armed, violent, and coordinated individuals focused on breaching a building at all costs," he testified.

The hearing was the first of many examinations of what happened that day, coming almost seven weeks after the attack and over a week after the Senate voted to acquit Trump of inciting the insurrection by telling his supporters to "fight like hell" to overturn his election defeat. Fencing and National Guard troops still surround the Capitol in a wide perimeter, cutting off streets and sidewalks that are normally full of cars, pedestrians and tourists.

The joint hearing, part of an investigation by two Senate committees, was the first time the officials testified publicly about the events of Jan. 6. In addition to Sund, former Senate Sergeant-at-Arms Michael Stenger, former House Sergeant-at-Arms Paul Irving and Robert Contee, the acting chief of police for the Metropolitan Police Department, testified.

Irving and Stenger also resigned under pressure immediately after the deadly attack. They were Sund's supervisors and in charge of security for the House and Senate.

"We must have the facts, and the answers are in this room," Senate Rules Committee Chairwoman Amy Klobuchar said at the beginning of the hearing. The Rules panel is conducting the joint probe with the Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee.

Critics: GOP measures target Black voter turnout in Georgia

ATLANTA (AP)—Fueled by Black turnout, Democrats scored stunning wins in Georgia in the presidential and U.S. Senate races. Now, Republicans are trying to make sure it doesn't happen again.

GOP lawmakers in the once reliably red state are rolling out an aggressive slate of voting legislation that critics argue is tailored to curtail the power of Black voters and undo years of work by Stacey Abrams and others to increase engagement among people of color, including Latino and Asian American communities.

The proposals are similar to those pushed by Republicans in other battleground states: adding barriers to mail-in and early voting, major factors in helping Joe Biden win Georgia's 16 Electoral College votes and Raphael Warnock and Jon Ossoff take the two Senate seats that gave Democrats control of the chamber.

But one aspect of their plans, a proposal to eliminate early voting on Sundays, seems specifically targeted at a traditional get-out-the-vote campaign used by Black churches, referred to as "souls to the polls." It's led many to suggest Republicans are trying to stop a successful effort to boost Black voter turnout in Georgia, where they make up about a third of the population and have faced a dark history of attempts to silence their voices in elections.

"It's a new form of voter suppression, the Klan in three-piece suits rather than white hoods," said the Rev. Timothy McDonald III of the First Iconium Baptist Church in Atlanta, which has participated in souls to the polls events. "They know the power of the Black vote, and their goal is to suppress that power."

In previous elections, souls to the polls campaigns were festive, with vehicles and people parading to election offices during early voting windows. Churches would sometimes playfully compete to see which could bring the most voters, said McDonald, who described the GOP legislation as "spiteful."

In Georgia and elsewhere, Republicans say proposals to tighten voting access are meant to bolster confidence in elections, though they have been some of the loudest proponents of meritless claims that the election was fraudulent. The Brennan Center for Justice, a public policy group, has counted 165 bills in 33 states this year meant to limit access to voting.

In Georgia, Republicans control state government and have introduced dozens of legislative measures that would restrict voting access. GOP state Rep. Barry Fleming is chief sponsor of a wide-ranging proposal that would ban Sunday early voting, require a photo ID for absentee voting, limit the time when an absentee ballot could be requested, restrict where ballot drop boxes could be placed and curb the use of mobile voting units, among other changes.

In committee hearings, Fleming has cast the legislation as "an attempt to restore the confidence of our public in our election system." He didn't respond to an email or phone message requesting comment.

Asia

AMID FOREIGN CONCERNS

Protests in Myanmar continue after strike

YANGON, Myanmar (AP)—Protesters against the military's seizure of power in Myanmar were back on the streets of cities and towns on Tuesday, a day after a general strike shuttered shops and brought huge numbers out to demonstrate.

In Mandalay, the country's second-biggest city, a funeral was held for 37-year-old Thet Naing Win, one of two protesters shot dead by security forces on Saturday.

He and a teenage boy were killed when police and soldiers opened fire on a crowd that had gathered to support dock workers whom the authorities were trying to force to work. They have been on strike, as have many civil servants and state enterprise workers, as part of a nationwide civil obedience movement against the Feb. 1 military takeover.

Numbers were down from Monday's massive crowds, but groups of demonstrators in Yangon, the country's biggest city, assembled again at various venues on Tuesday for peaceful protests.

Protesters trained their ire on a new target Tuesday, gathering outside the Indonesian Embassy in response to a news report that Jakarta was proposing to its regional neighbors that they offer qualified support for the junta's plan for a new election next year. The demonstrators demand that the results of last year's election, won in a landslide by Aung San Suu Kyi's National League for Democracy party, to be honored.

The protesters chanted slogans against the military coup and held banners, one of which read "Friend or Enemy. You choose, Indonesia."

"What I hope, as a citizen of Myanmar, is to stand with the truth. We can't wait one year," said one demonstrator, Han Ni.

The report by an international news agency, published Monday, triggered dismay among supporters of the protest movement. It said Indonesia was seeking to have fellow members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations agree on an action plan to hold the junta to its promise to hold free and fair elections in a year's time.

Indonesian Foreign Ministry spokesperson Teuku Faizasyah denied the report, saying Tuesday that it "is not Indonesia's position at all to support a new election in Myanmar." He said Indonesian Foreign Minister Retno Marsudi was gathering the views of fellow ASEAN members ahead of a special meeting it hopes will be held on the situation in Myanmar.

Myanmar's military says it took power because last November's election was marked by widespread voting irregularities, an assertion that was refuted by the state election commission, whose members have since been replaced by the ruling junta. The junta has said it will rule for a year under a state of emergency and then hold new polls.

Suu Kyi's party would have been installed for a second five-year term, but the army blocked Parliament from convening and detained her, President Win Myint and other top members of her government.

There is continuing international concern over Myanmar, with foreign ministers from the Group of Seven nations on Tuesday issuing their second statement since the coup.

The group, consisting of Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the United Kingdom, the United States and the European Union, condemned violence committed by Myanmar's security forces and demanded they act with restraint according to international standards for human rights.

"Anyone responding to peaceful protests with violence must be held to account," they said.

The group also condemned restrictions on freedom of expression, including arrests and the blocking of internet access, and called for the release of Suu Kyi and her colleagues.

The United States and several Western governments have called for the junta to refrain from violence, release detainees and restore Suu Kyi's government.

On Monday, the U.S. said it was imposing sanctions against more junta members because of the killing of peaceful protesters by security forces.

Lt. Gen. Moe Myint Tun and Gen. Maung Maung Kyaw were added to other military leaders and entities facing U.S. sanctions. Britain and Canada have taken similar actions since the coup.

U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken said in a statement that the U.S. condemns the attacks on protesters and vowed to take further action if more violence occurs.

Japan emperor shows concern to those suffering in pandemic

TOKYO (AP)—Japan's Emperor Naruhito expressed concern about the impact the coronavirus pandemic has had on people's health and livelihoods, noting that he has used online meetings to connect with people he could not console in person.

Naruhito had expressed hope to reach out to people and stay close to them as emperor, following the example of his father, Akihito, who abdicated in 2019 due to age. But Naruhito has largely retreated behind the palace moat due to the pandemic and made only limited public appearances, including the 75th anniversary of the end of the World War II in August.

"We have been at the mercy of the coronavirus pandemic over the past year," Naruhito told a news conference for selected Japanese media ahead of his 61st birthday Tuesday. "Both I and (Empress) Masako are concerned about the pandemic that is not easily coming to an end."

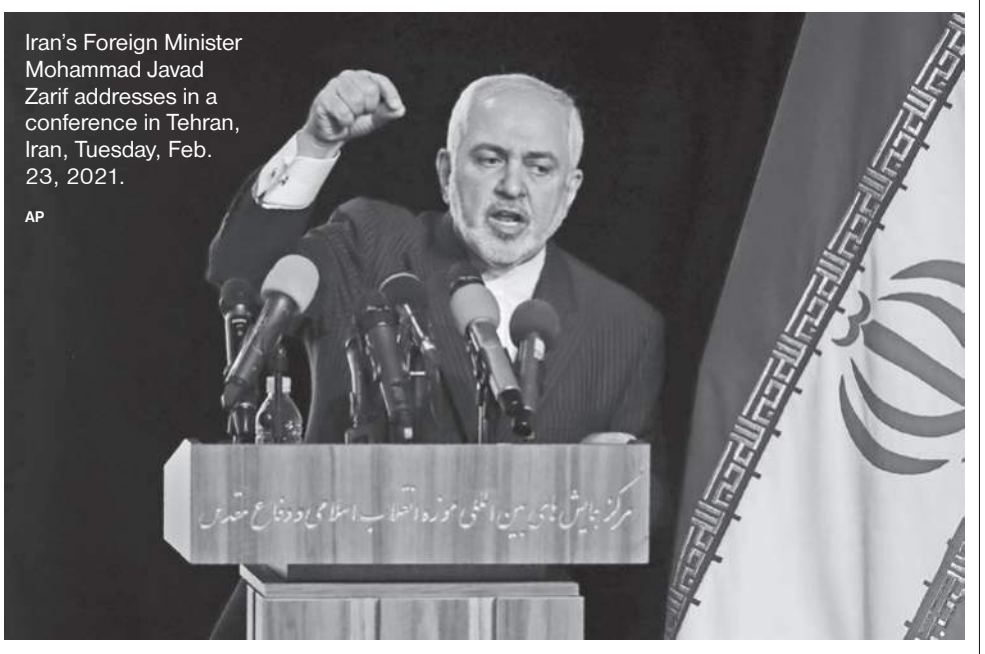
The Imperial Household Agency canceled the emperor's customary public greetings from the palace balcony, and other palace events for his birthday were scaled down due to the pandemic.

Naruhito said he was concerned about people facing difficulties but expressed hope of a bright future when people overcome the pandemic.

Going online to connect with people and offer help, Naruhito said he has attended international conferences and virtually visited elderly care centers, hospitals and other places. "I found a new potential in the online activity and it was a major discovery," Naruhito said.

Japan has counted about 426,500 cases of COVID-19 and 7,500 deaths, a toll lower than many advanced countries. It started vaccinations for the virus last week, belatedly beginning a campaign that is considered key to holding the delayed Tokyo Olympics this summer.

World



Iran's Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif addresses in a conference in Tehran, Iran, Tuesday, Feb. 23, 2021.

AP

Iran officially imposes curbs on UN nuclear inspections

TEHRAN, Iran (AP)—Iran officially started restricting international inspections of its nuclear facilities Tuesday, a bid to pressure European countries and President Joe Biden's administration to lift crippling economic sanctions and restore the 2015 nuclear deal.

World powers slammed the restrictions as a "dangerous" move.

It came as the International Atomic Energy Agency reported in a confidential document distributed to member countries and seen by The Associated Press that Iran had added 17.6 kilograms (38.8 pounds) of uranium enriched up to 20% to its stockpile as of Feb. 16.

It was the first official confirmation of plans Iran announced in January to enrich to the greater purity, which is just a technical step away from weapons-grade levels and far past the 3.67% purity allowed under the nuclear deal known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, or JCPOA.

Iran also increased its total enriched uranium stockpile to 2,967.8 kilograms (6,542.9 pounds), up from 2,442.9 kilograms (5,385.7 pounds) reported on Nov. 2, the IAEA reported.

Iran's violations of the JCPOA and the move Tuesday to limit international inspections underscore the daunting task facing Biden as he seeks to reverse former President Donald Trump's decision to pull the U.S. unilaterally out of the deal in 2018. That left Germany, France, Britain, China and Russia struggling to keep it alive.

The JCPOA was the most significant pact between Iran and major world powers since its 1979 Islamic revolution, and Germany, France and Britain stressed their commitment Tuesday to preserving it, urging Iran to "stop and reverse all measures that reduce transparency."

"The E3 are united in underlining the dangerous nature of this decision," the European powers said in a statement. "It will significantly constrain the IAEA's access to sites and to safeguards-relevant information."

Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif said a new law had gone into effect Tuesday morning, under which Iran will no longer share surveillance footage of its nuclear facilities with the U.N. agency.

"We never gave them live video, but (recordings) were given daily and weekly," Zarif said of the IAEA's access to information recorded by camera monitors. "The tape recording of our (nuclear) program will be kept in Iran."

The Atomic Energy Organization of Iran, Tehran's civilian nuclear agency, has promised to preserve the tapes for three months, then hand them over to the IAEA—but only if granted sanctions relief. Otherwise, Iran has vowed to erase the tapes, narrowing the window for a diplomatic breakthrough.

Diplomatic doses: Israel shares vaccines with allied nations

JERUSALEM (AP)—After jumping out to a quick start in its vaccination campaign, Israel announced Tuesday that it has decided to share a small surplus of its coronavirus vaccines with several friendly countries.

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's decision to share the vaccines with his diplomatic partners comes at a time when Israel has come under international criticism for not providing significant quantities to the Palestinians. He also faced accusations from a rival of acting unilaterally and wasting taxpayer funds.

Netanyahu's move is the latest illustration of how coronavirus vaccines have emerged as a kind of diplomatic currency, with countries that have the medicines using their supplies for political gain.

While Israel does not produce vaccines, Netanyahu has moved aggressively to secure enough vaccines for Israel's 9.3 million people in deals with Pfizer and Moderna. In just under two months, Israel has vaccinated roughly half its population, one of the highest per capita rates in the world, and is aiming to have virtually all of its adults fully vaccinated by the end of next month.

"Our supply is beyond what is needed by the citizens of Israel," Netanyahu told reporters Tuesday. "We have more than enough to help where we can. It is mostly symbolic."

Netanyahu's office said some vaccines would be shared with the Palestinians. But it refused to identify any of the countries it planned to assist.

Israel's public broadcaster Kan said the countries included Guatemala, Honduras, the Czech Republic and Hungary—nations that have all provided strong diplomatic backing to Netanyahu's hard-line government in recent years. The report said the vaccines were purchased from Moderna.

Life & Style

Hillary Clinton and Louise Penny co-writing mystery novel

NEW YORK (AP)—One of the world's better known fans of mystery novels, Hillary Rodham Clinton, is now writing one.

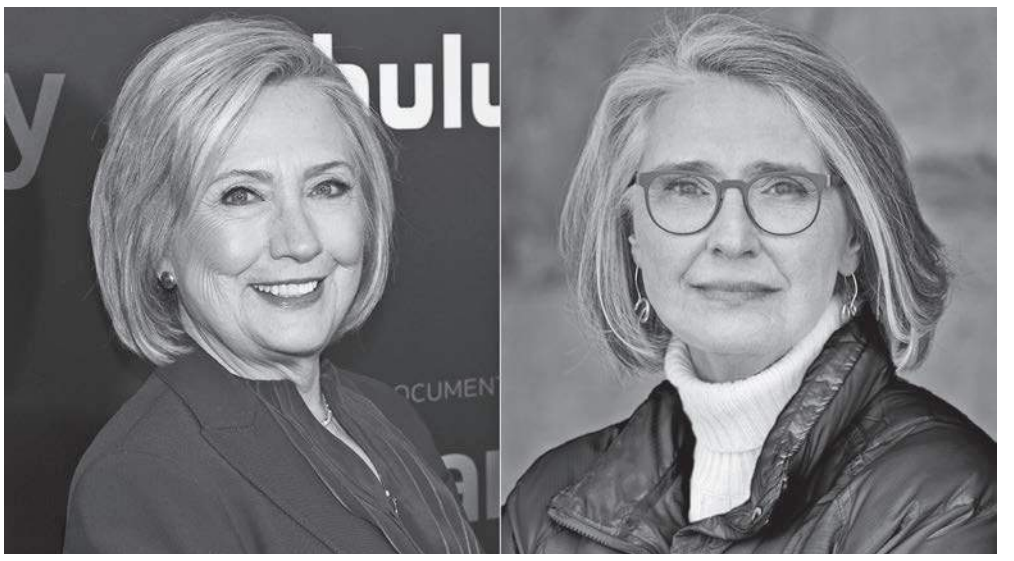
Clinton is teaming up with her friend, the novelist Louise Penny, on "State of Terror," which has a plot that might occur to someone of Clinton's background: A "novice" secretary of state, working in the administration of a rival politician, tries to solve a wave of terrorist attacks. The novel comes out Oct. 12, and will be jointly released by Clinton's publisher, Simon & Schuster, and Penny's, St. Martin's Press.

"Writing a thriller with Louise is a dream come true," Clinton, who has expressed admiration for Penny and other mystery writers in the past, said in a statement Tuesday. "I've relished every one of her books and their characters as well as her friendship. Now we're joining our experiences to explore the complex world of high stakes diplomacy and treachery. All is not as it first appears."

Penny, an award-winning author from Canada whose novels include "The Cruelest Month" and "The Brutal Telling," said in a statement that she could not "say yes fast enough" to the chance of working with Clinton.

"What an incredible experience, to get inside the State Department. Inside the White House. Inside the mind of the Secretary of State as high stake crises explode," she said. "Before we started, we talked about her time as Secretary of State. What was her worst nightmare? 'State of Terror' is the answer."

Fiction writing and worst-case scenarios have become a favorite pastime for Clinton and her husband, former President Bill Clinton. He collaborated with James Patterson on the million-selling cyber thriller "The President is Missing," and on a new novel, "The President's Daughter," which comes out in June.



This combination photo shows former secretary of state Hillary Clinton at the premiere of the Hulu documentary "Hillary" in New York on March 4, 2020, left, and a portrait of author Louise Penny. AP

Hillary Clinton, secretary of state during Barack Obama's first term, has written a handful of nonfiction works. They include the memoir "Living History"; "Hard Choices," which covered her time with Obama, who defeated her in the 2008 Democratic presidential primary; and "What Happened," which focuses on her stunning loss to Donald Trump in the 2016 election.

"State of Terror" appears to draw not just on her years as secretary of state, but on her thoughts about the Trump administration's "America First" foreign policy. According to Simon & Schuster and St. Martin's, the main character is "tasked with assembling a team to unravel the deadly conspiracy, a scheme carefully designed to take advantage of an American government dangerously out of touch and out of power in the places where it counts the most."

Financial terms were not disclosed. Clinton was represented by the Washington attorney Robert Barnett, whose other clients include Obama and Bill Clinton. Penny was represented by David Gernert, whose New York-based Gernert Company has worked with, among others, John Grisham, Stewart O'Nan and Chasten Buttigieg, husband of Secretary of Transportation Pete Buttigieg.

Shailene Woodley confirms she's engaged to Rodgers

Shailene Woodley confirmed that she's engaged to Green Bay Packers quarterback Aaron Rodgers.

Woodley

The actor discussed her relationship with Rodgers on "The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon" on Monday, saying they got engaged "a while ago." The 37-year-old Rodgers mentioned his engagement and thanked his fiancée while accepting his third career MVP award on Feb. 6 but didn't say her name.

"Yes, we are engaged," Woodley said. "We are engaged. But for us, it's not new news, you know, so it's kind of funny. Everybody right now is freaking out over it and we're like, 'Yeah, we've been engaged for a while.'"

The 29-year-old Woodley said she still hasn't attended one of Rodgers' games, noting the attendance restrictions caused by the pandemic this past season. Woodley added that she'd never even seen a football game before meeting Rodgers. ***(AP)***

Betty White, furry friends star in 50-year-old 'Pet Set'

LOS ANGELES (AP)—On a TV show Betty White hosted 50 years ago, the perpetual charmer flirts with James Brolin, teases Della Reese and trades quips with Carol Burnett.

But White appears most delighted in the company of the real stars of "Betty White's Pet Set," among them elephants, lions and snakes. And dogs, lots of dogs.

"All I can say is, Charlie Brown is right: Happiness is a warm puppy," a beaming White says in one episode, cuddling a pair of tiny brown pooches as she quotes the Peanuts comic strip character.

She and her husband, the late game show host Allen Ludden, produced the 39-episode series (originally titled "The Pet Set") that aired in syndication in 1971 and was released Tuesday on DVD and streaming and digital platforms after a laborious restoration process.

Making the show was strictly a labor of love for the Emmy-winning star of "The Golden Girls" and "The Mary Tyler Moore Show" who, at the age of 99, has retained her affection and compassion for animals.

"When Allen and I started our own production company so many years ago, the one show I wanted to do was 'The Pet Set,'" White told The Associated Press. "Allen's offices were the most exciting in the building because we were the only show pre-screening guests who were furry and four-legged."

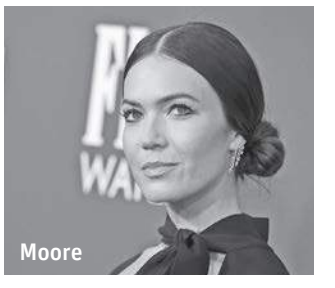
Mandy Moore announces birth of son 'right on his due date'

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Mandy Moore is officially a mom. The 36-year-old "This Is Us" star announced the birth of her first child, a son named August Harrison Goldsmith, on her Instagram Tuesday.

"Gus is here," Moore wrote in the post along with a photo. "He was punctual and arrived right on his due date much to the delight of his parents."

She added that they were prepared to, "Fall in love in all sorts of brand new ways, but it goes beyond anything we could have ever imagined."

This is the first child for Moore and husband Taylor Goldsmith, a musician she married in 2018.



Moore

Only grandchild announces transition to living as a boy

DEAR ABBY

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN

FROM UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

DEAR ABBY: My granddaughter just informed me she has decided she would be happier living as a boy, and she has gone so far as to legally change her name. I want to be supportive, but I admit I'm having a lot of trouble accepting it, or at least figuring out how to deal with it.

She's my only grandchild and most likely the only one I'll ever have. I loved my granddaughter with all my heart, and I don't know how to shift gears to a grandson. I keep stumbling when I try to use the new name. I would welcome any suggestions you could make, including information about support groups you might know of.

GRANDMA IN PAIN

DEAR GRANDMA: Gender reassignment is not something that someone does on a lark. There are many steps involved, and the journey, while liberating, can be challenging both physically and emotionally. I am sure this is something your grandchild has given much thought to.

Yes, coming to terms with it can be as much of a journey for family as it is for the transgender person, and it can take time and understanding on all sides. A group called PFLAG can help you through this. It has been mentioned in my column for decades. It has helped countless families to build bridges of understanding between themselves and their lesbian, gay and transgender loved ones. Please don't wait to contact them. You will find PFLAG at pflag.org, and their phone number is (202) 467-8180.

■ ■ ■ ■

DEAR ABBY: I am a 50-year-old man. My whole life, my relationship with my father has been strained. When I was in my teens and 20s, when he bought presents for my two siblings and not for me, he would say things to me like, "I forgot I had you."

In spite of this, I became very successful in life. I had a great career and am now retired. My father recently announced to me that he had made only two mistakes in his life—marrying my mother, who has put up with him for more than 60 years, and having children.

My dilemma is, he is now 90 with many health problems. He is in the hospital now for a heart problem. I know he won't last much longer. I feel nothing for him, and I am not sad. When he dies, I know I won't care. Is this normal? I feel guilty for feeling this way.

DON'T CARE IN TENNESSEE

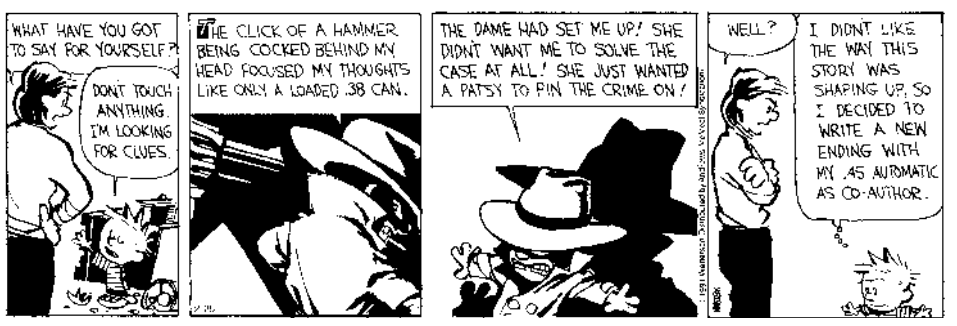
DEAR DON'T CARE: Please don't feel guilty for feeling no regret at the prospect of "losing" a cruel and withholding parent who made it his business to make those around him feel "less than." Do not be surprised if, rather than feel a sense of loss, you feel at peace, as though a weight has been lifted from your shoulders. You should not feel guilty for that, either. Comfort and emotionally support your mother as best you can when he dies, but don't be shocked if she, too, feels some relief. Their union could not have been the happiest.

For an excellent guide to becoming a better conversationalist and a more sociable person, order "How to Be Popular." Send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for $8 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby, Popularity Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Shipping and handling are included in the price.)

Pastimes

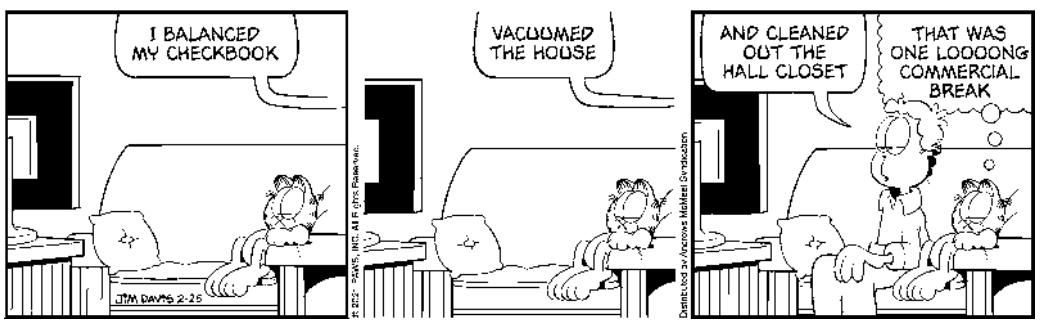
Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson


WHAT HAVE YOU GOT TO SAY FOR YOURSELF?
DON'T TOUCH ANYTHING. I'M LOOKING FOR CLUES.
THE CLICK OF A HAMMER BEING COCKED BEHIND MY HEAD FOCUSED MY THOUGHTS LIKE ONLY A LOADED .38 CAN.
THE DAME HAD SET ME UP! SHE DIDN'T WANT ME TO SOLVE THE CASE AT ALL! SHE JUST WANTED A PATSY TO PIN THE CRIME ON!
WELL?
I DIDN'T LIKE THE WAY THIS STORY WAS SHAPING UP, SO I DECIDED TO WRITE A NEW ENDING WITH MY .45 AUTOMATIC AS CO-AUTHOR.

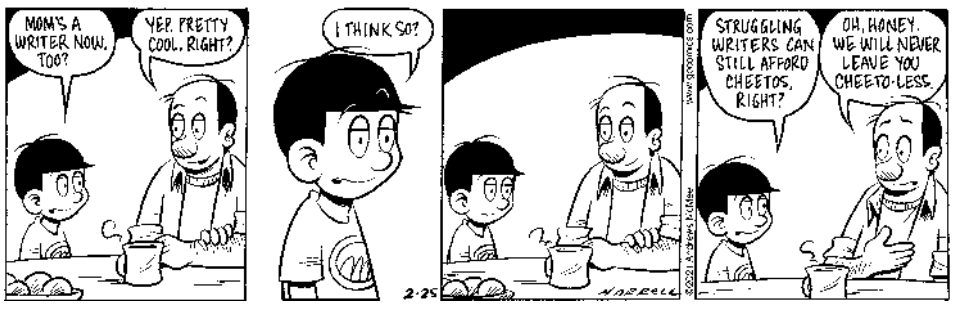
Garfield®

By Jim Davis


I BALANCED MY CHECKBOOK
VACUUMED THE HOUSE
AND CLEANED OUT THE HALL CLOSET
THAT WAS ONE LOOOONG COMMERCIAL BREAK
JIM DAVIS 2-25

Adam@home

By Bryan Basset


MOM'S A WRITER NOW, TOO?
YEP. PRETTY COOL, RIGHT?
I THINK SO?
STRUGGLING WRITERS CAN STILL AFFORD CHEETOS, RIGHT?
OH, HONEY. WE WILL NEVER LEAVE YOU CHEETO-LESS.
2-25

The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy

HMM... HOW IS THE PASTA?
THE CHEF OPENS A CAN OF SPAGHETTIOS AND DUMPS IT IN A PAN.
WELL, HECK, I COULD DO THAT.
GOOD. THE CHEF IS GOING ON VACATION NEXT WEEK, AND WE NEED A REPLACEMENT.

CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS

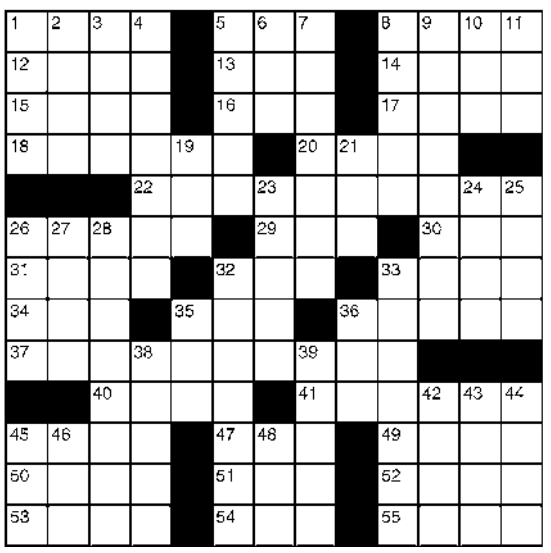
1 Slightly
5 "Me time" resort
8 Some corp. recruits
12 Bryn —
13 — Aviv
14 Mystique
15 Lotion additive
16 Canine cry
17 Rocky outcrop
18 One-dimensional
20 Caboose
22 Savvy
26 "Va-moose!"
29 Tooth doc's degree
30 Great weight
31 Air show stunt
32 Swelled head
33 Chow
34 100 percent
35 Airport screening org.
36 Pugilist's weapons
37 1987 film with Michael Douglas as Gordon Gekko
40 Use the oven
41 Entry shelter
45 High point
47 Table support
49 Actor Jannings
50 Indy event
51 Texter's chuckle
52 Logical
53 Guffaws
54 Compass dir.
55 Read quickly

DOWN

1 Human rights lawyer Clooney
2 Indonesian island
3 Victor's cry
4 Sticky pine product
5 Fab Four drummer
6 Capita lead-in
7 Creamy pasta sauce
8 Showy parrot
9 Filled tortillas
10 Altar constellation
11 Droop
19 Cash dispenser
21 UFO crew
23 Mystery-writing award
24 Chimney buildup
25 Termini
26 Cabbage salad
27 Pop choice
28 Price reduction
32 Getty of "The Golden Girls"
33 Gym member's goal
35 "For shame!"
36 Hardly any
38 Minnesota's 10,000+
39 Two under par
42 Apple since 1998
43 Pinta's companion
44 Hidden valley
45 Snoop
46 — de cologne
48 Very long time

Solution time: 24 mins.

Yesterday's answer 2-25



STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call **1-900-226-5955**! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Jameela Jamil, 35; Rashida Jones, 45; Chelsea Handler, 46; Sean Astin, 50.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY: You'll be looking for answers this year, questioning everything and considering what to do next. Your energy is in high gear, and your desire to bring about change will keep you moving full speed ahead. Look at your skills, talents, knowledge and what's trending, and you'll find a unique way to use what you have to offer to succeed. Your numbers are 8, 12, 19, 28, 30, 37, 43.

ARIES *(March 21-April 19):* Attending virtual meetings, connecting with people who have something to offer and exploring possibilities on your professional goals are favored. The information you receive should be verified before you commit to participating. Trust your intuition when dealing with pushy people. ✪✪✪✪

TAURUS *(April 20-May 20):* Let others make the first moves. Don't put yourself at risk or do something that will make you look bad or taint your reputation. Look inward and make personal changes that will build confidence and help you recognize what's best for you. ✪✪

GEMINI *(May 21-June 20):* Observation is your best friend. Listen carefully, and you'll discover discrepancies that work against what you are trying to achieve. Make corrections, be articulate and show compassion. You will gain respect and ward off discord. Expand your interests. ✪✪✪✪

CANCER *(June 21-July 22):* Keep your plans a secret until you have everything in place. Preparation will help you avoid loss. A personal or physical change you make will give you the boost you require to gain recognition. A romantic gesture will be difficult to resist. ✪✪✪

LEO *(July 23-Aug. 22):* Don't jump to conclusions or make assumptions. Stand back and let situations play out naturally. Distance yourself from people trying to get you involved in a questionable joint venture. Extravagant behavior will lead to limitations. ✪✪✪

VIRGO *(Aug. 23-Sept. 22):* Stick to what you know and do best. Don't get involved in bureaucratic matters if you aren't prepared with facts to back your claims. Concentrate on personal changes that will enhance your life and meaningful relationships, and bring you peace of mind. ✪✪✪

LIBRA *(Sept. 23-Oct. 22):* You are better off doing things on your own. Joint endeavors will lead to disappointment, arguments and loss. Use your intelligence and charm to outmaneuver anyone trying to push you in a direction you don't want to head. Live life your way. ✪✪✪✪

SCORPIO *(Oct. 23-Nov. 21):* Don't count on someone using emotional means to manipulate you. Avoid people who keep changing their minds or are unpredictable. Build relationships with people who share your values, beliefs and interests. Romance is on the rise. ✪✪

SAGITTARIUS *(Nov. 22-Dec. 21):* Put your money to proper use. Look at your options, and consider offers that can take you to a better professional position. Don't spend unnecessarily or expect others to pay your way. Do your part, stand your ground and follow your heart. ✪✪✪✪✪

CAPRICORN *(Dec. 22-Jan. 19):* An unexpected offer will grab your attention. Before you take action, go over details diligently. Leave nothing to chance, and look for pitfalls that can lead to a disagreement or loss. If doubt sets in, take a pass. ✪✪✪

AQUARIUS *(Jan. 20-Feb. 18):* You'll face indecisiveness if you receive mixed messages. Question whatever you don't understand, and if you don't get a satisfactory explanation, be prepared to walk away. Invest more time and effort into what you can achieve. Choose peace of mind over anxiety. ✪✪✪

PISCES *(Feb. 19-March 20):* Don't stop until you reach your goal. He or she who hesitates will lose out on something spectacular. Use your intuition to navigate your way through any challenges you face. Trust in your ability to make things happen. ✪✪✪

Birthday Baby: You are changeable, curious and unique. You are aggressive and fortuitous.

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku *By Dave Green*

5				3				
6		8	2					
			9	8			1	5
	6					2		
9		5				4		1
		4					5	
1	2			9	6			
					7	3		2
				2				8

Difficulty Level ★★★ 2/25

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterday's Answer

8	3	9	1	6	4	5	2	7
6	7	2	5	8	3	9	4	1
1	5	4	9	2	7	8	6	3
2	4	1	8	7	9	3	5	6
3	6	5	4	1	2	7	8	9
9	8	7	6	3	5	4	1	2
5	9	6	7	4	1	2	3	8
4	2	8	3	9	6	1	7	5
7	1	3	2	5	8	6	9	4

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WONDERWORD®

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally and even backward. Find them, circle each letter of the word and strike it off the list. The leftover letters spell the **WONDERWORD.**

BREATHE IN, BREATHE OUT **Solution: 4 letters**

R	V	Y	T	U	O	W	O	L	B	R	E	A	T	H
A	E	R	A	C	H	E	S	T	R	A	C	H	E	A
L	N	S	I	D	L	O	H	N	E	G	Y	X	O	A
O	T	C	P	A	S	T	E	R	O	I	D	S	W	R
E	O	N	H	I	Q	E	O	N	O	S	E	G	P	N
V	L	N	E	I	R	N	L	B	E	P	A	U	S	E
L	I	S	S	V	L	O	I	A	A	L	C	L	P	S
A	N	S	U	U	O	L	L	C	H	C	L	P	M	A
S	A	G	A	N	C	L	Y	O	I	W	C	O	U	F
A	P	N	T	T	I	U	F	H	G	O	K	O	P	N
L	N	U	S	R	P	S	M	S	P	I	R	I	V	A
A	E	L	T	E	E	I	N	D	N	P	S	A	G	R
C	A	S	L	U	S	N	L	G	M	O	U	T	H	E
U	O	R	A	L	M	A	I	L	E	Z	E	E	N	S
N	I	T	R	I	L	O	G	Y	E	X	H	A	L	E

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Alveolar, Apnea, Blowout, Breath, Chest, Chilly, Cinqair, COPD, Elliptx, Exhale, Fasenra, Flovent, Gases, Gasp, Gulp, Hiccup, Hold, Inert, Inhale, Lungs, Mouth, Mucus, Nares, Nose, Nostril, Nucala, Oral, Oxygen, Pause, Pollen, Pumps, Respirologist, Sinus, Smoking, Sneeze, Spiriva, Sputum, Steroids, Tobacco, Trachea, Trilogy, Ventolin, Whales, Yupelri

Yesterday's Answer: Space Age

The NEW **Treasury 43** can be purchased online at www.WonderWordBooks.com, or call 1-800-642-6480.

Doncic hits 3 to lift Mavs over Celtics

DALLAS (AP)—Luka Doncic slammed the scorer's table in joy this time, rather than anger.

The Dallas sensation hit a tiebreaking 3-pointer with 0.1 seconds remaining—his second go-ahead 3 in the final minute—and the Mavericks avoided a fourth-quarter collapse in a 110-107 victory over the Boston Celtics on Tuesday night.

The Celtics trailed by 11 points with three minutes to go before Jaylen Brown put them in front in the final minute with a short jumper. Doncic answered with a difficult 3 over 6-foot-8 Daniel Theis before Brown pulled Boston even at 107-all with another bucket.

Doncic did it again—this time with Kemba Walker running at him on a step-back shot from the left wing—and turned to the scorer's table in the same way he had after a last-second loss to Phoenix. Devin Booker hit the go-ahead shot in the final seconds of that game before Doncic's desperation attempt missed. That 109-108 loss capped a six-game losing streak.

After the latest dramatic shot similar to one Doncic drained to beat the Los Angeles Clippers in Game 4 of a first-round series in the playoff bubble, Boston's desperate inbound toss toward the basket hit the rim, sealing the Dallas win.

"It's just something that I've been doing, I tried to do," said Doncic, who missed a wide-open 3 that would have tied Portland late in a 121-118 loss on Feb. 14 before an eight-day break forced by two weather-related postponements.

"But sometimes you're going to miss it, like the last game against Portland. Sometimes you're going to make it."

Doncic scored 31 points on 6-of-8 shooting from 3, while Brown had 29 and Jayson Tatum added 28 in an All-Star matchup for the trio after

Dallas Mavericks guard Luka Doncic (77) looks to pass the ball as Boston Celtics guard Jaylen Brown (7) defends during the first half of an NBA game in Dallas, Tuesday, Feb. 23, 2021. AP

Brown and Tatum were named Eastern Conference reserves earlier in the day. Doncic is a West starter for the second straight season.

Playing without Kristaps Porzingis for a second straight night on a back-to-back because of a tight lower back for his European sidekick, Doncic was steady to help Dallas build a fourth-quarter lead before another spectacular finish five days before his 22nd birthday. He had 10 rebounds and eight assists.

"He's just a very unique player, a very unique person," coach Rick Carlisle said. "The wiring of people like Luka Doncic, Michael Jordan, LeBron James, Larry Bird, Kobe Bryant, guys that have this laser-like focus in these situations. It's difficult to explain how their minds and their brains work."

Bucks 139, Timberwolves 112

In Milwaukee, Giannis Antetokoumpo had 37 points, eight rebounds and eight assists as the Bucks spoiled the debut of new Minnesota coach Chris Finch.

Antetokounmpo put up those numbers in just 29 minutes. Bryn Forbes added a season-high 23 points as the Bucks won their third straight and had seven players score in double figures. The Bucks shot 53.5% overall and went 20 of 42 from 3-point range.

Karl-Anthony Towns and Malik Beasley each scored 26 points for the Timberwolves.

Cavaliers 112, Hawks 111

In Cleveland, Lamar Stevens drove for an easy dunk with 4.1 seconds left and Atlanta failed to get off a final shot as the Cavaliers beat the Hawks to end their 10-game losing streak—the NBA's longest this season.

It was Cleveland's first win since Feb. 1, and for long stretches of the fourth quarter it appeared in doubt.

Collin Sexton scored 29 points, Darius Garland 17 and Jarrett Allen had 13 points and 14 rebounds for the Cavs.

76ers 109, Raptors 102

In Tampa, Tobias Harris scored 12 of his 23 points in the fourth quarter and Philadelphia beat Toronto to end the Raptors' four-game winning streak.

Joel Embiid had 18 points and 12 rebounds for the 76ers, and Furkan Korkmanz added 19 points.

Normal Powell led the Raptors with 24 points. Pascal Siakam added 22 and Fred VanVleet had 12 points, eight rebounds and eight assists.

Ben Simmons finished with 15 points, nine rebounds and seven assists for the 76ers.

Nets 127, Kings 118

In New York, Bruce Brown scored 13 of his 29 points in the fourth quarter to lead Brooklyn over Sacramento.

James Harden recorded his sixth triple-double with the Nets, finishing with 29 points, 11 rebounds and 14 assists. He ranks second in franchise history, one behind Jason Kidd.

Kyrie Irving added 21 points as Brooklyn extended its winning streak to seven games and improved to 21-12.

Pistons 105, Magic 93

In Orlando, rookie guard Saben Lee scored a career-best 21 points, Josh Jackson added 18 and Detroit snapped a three-game losing streak with a win over the Magic.

Detroit's ninth victory of the season ended Orlando's three-game winning streak and put a damper on Magic center Nikola Vucevic's selection as a reserve for the NBA All-Star Game. Vucevic finished with 20 points and nine rebounds.

Warriors 114, Knicks 106

In New York, Stephen Curry welcomed fans back to Madison Square Garden with another big night in the building, scoring 37 points and leading Golden State past the Knicks.

Curry scored 26 points in the second half and added six rebounds and six assists. Kelly Oubre Jr. added 19 points and Andrew Wiggins had 16 for the Warriors.

Julius Randle went from the high of his first All-Star selection to the low of getting thrown out in the final seconds after picking up his second technical foul. He had 25 points, 10 rebounds and seven assists.

Clippers 135, Wizards 116

In Los Angeles, Kawhi Leonard scored 32 points and the Clippers routed Washington, snapping the Wizards' season-high five-game winning streak.

Paul George had 30 points before leaving with 7:19 remaining because of a minutes restriction after a toe injury. The Clippers had four bench players in double figures as their reserves outscored the Wizards' subs 58-29.

Bradley Beal, the NBA's leading scorer at 32.9 points per game, finished with 28 points and 10 assists. Russell Westbrook had 20 points, 10 assists and nine rebounds.

Nuggets 111, Trail Blazers 106

In Denver, Nikola Jokic had 41 points and Jamal Murray celebrated his 24th birthday by scoring 19 of his 24 in the fourth quarter to lead the Nuggets over Portland.

Damian Lillard had 20 of his 25 points in the second half and added 13 assists but it wasn't enough for the Blazers, who were coming off a 32-point loss Monday night in Phoenix.

TRIBUNE SPORTS SCORES

NBA STANDINGS

EASTERN CONFERENCE

Atlantic	W	L	PCT	GB
Philadelphia	21	11	.656	0.0
Brooklyn	21	12	.636	0.5
Toronto	16	16	.500	5.0
Boston	15	16	.484	5.5
New York	15	17	.469	6.0
Central				
Milwaukee	19	13	.594	0.0
Indiana	15	14	.517	2.5
Chicago	14	16	.467	4.0
Cleveland	11	21	.344	8.0
Detroit	9	22	.290	9.5
Southeast				
Charlotte	14	16	.467	0.0
Miami	14	17	.452	0.5
Atlanta	13	18	.419	1.5
Orlando	13	19	.406	2.0
Washington	11	18	.379	2.5

WESTERN CONFERENCE

Pacific				
LA Clippers	23	10	.697	0.0
LA Lakers	22	10	.688	0.5
Phoenix	20	10	.667	1.5
Golden State	17	15	.531	5.5
Sacramento	12	19	.387	10.0
Southwest				
San Antonio	16	11	.593	0.0
Dallas	15	15	.500	2.5
Memphis	13	14	.481	3.0
New Orleans	13	17	.433	4.5
Houston	11	18	.379	6.0
Northwest				
Utah	25	6	.806	0.0
Portland	18	13	.581	7.0
Denver	17	14	.548	8.0
Oklahoma City	12	19	.387	13.0
Minnesota	7	25	.219	18.5

BY THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

All-Star reserves chosen; Zion among first-timers

NEW YORK (AP)—New Orleans forward Zion Williamson now can be called an NBA All-Star, and only three others in the game's 70-year history have gotten there at a younger age.

Williamson is one of four first-time All-Stars, all revealed Tuesday night when the league announced the reserves for the March 7 game in Atlanta. Joining him as fellow All-Star rookies: Boston's Jaylen Brown, New York's Julius Randle and Chicago's Zach LaVine.

Phoenix's Chris Paul is an All-Star for the 11th time, and Brooklyn's James Harden is one for the ninth consecutive year. The rest of the reserves include Philadelphia's Ben Simmons, Boston's Jayson Tatum and Orlando's Nikola Vucevic from the Eastern Conference, along with the Los Angeles Lakers' Anthony Davis, the Los Angeles Clippers' Paul George, Utah teammates Donovan Mitchell and Rudy Gobert, and Portland's Damian Lillard from the Western Conference.

"It's definitely an honor," Mitchell said.

Team captains LeBron James of the Los Angeles Lakers and Kevin Durant of the Brooklyn Nets will draft their teams next week, with the rosters to be unveiled March 4. Starters, revealed last week, were chosen through a combination of voting by fans, NBA players and a media panel.

Reserves were chosen through voting by the league's head coaches.

"You do the best that you can," Orlando coach Steve Clifford said. "It's not easy. ... Every year, it is hard, and when you look at this year in the East there were a number of guys who are worthy of making it. So, it's difficult every year."

Atlanta's Trae Young, an All-Star last season, is not one this year despite averaging 26.9 points entering Tuesday, the most among anyone not selected. Miami forwards Bam Adebayo and Jimmy Butler didn't make the cut, nor did Phoenix's Devin Booker.

"Devin Booker is the most disrespected player in our league!!!! Simple as that," James tweeted.

Utah's Mike Conley also missed out on the nod.

"For a guy like him who's done so many things in his career, on and off the floor, he deserves this," Mitchell said of Conley.

There's still a chance for Conley, because Davis is likely to miss the game because of injury. NBA Commissioner Adam Silver will choose any injury replacements.

Tiger survives car crash but career might not

AP
A crane is used to lift a vehicle following a rollover accident involving golfer Tiger Woods, Tuesday, Feb. 23, 2021, in the Rancho Palos Verdes suburb of Los Angeles. Woods suffered leg injuries in the one-car accident and was undergoing surgery, authorities and his manager said.

LOS ANGELES (AP)—The sheared-off front of the wrecked SUV told part of the story, and the officers on the scene filled in the rest. Tiger Woods was lucky to be alive, they said, thanks to modern safety technology and a big dose of good luck.

Alive and well, no. But alive nonetheless.

The good news—no, make that the BEST news—is that Woods seems on track to survive after being pried Tuesday from the SUV he wrecked in Los Angeles. That's despite injuries that are so severe—including multiple open fractures of his leg—that he will be convalescing a long, long time.

The other piece of good news was that there was no immediate sign that Woods was impaired at the time of the crash—a significant bit of information, of course, because of his past.

The bad news is that the career of the world's greatest golfer—at least on the game's biggest stages—is probably over.

Coming back from his recent back surgery to play again at the age of 45 was always going to be a problem. Woods himself said previously that Father Time remains undefeated and that his return to top level play wasn't guaranteed.

Combine that with the gruesome injuries from his crash and now it borders on impossible.

This isn't Ben Hogan, coming back from a near fatal car accident in 1949 to win the U.S. Open next year. Hogan was nine years younger, hadn't been through multiple back and knee surgeries, and didn't have to try to swing his driver hard enough to hit it 350 yards to keep up with the other players.

Woods was fragile enough to begin with and there were already questions about whether he could return to play at a high level. He might share Hogan's determination to overcome everything in front of him, but in the end there's only so much he can do to mend his broken body.

That means Woods will never break the record of 18 major championship wins held by Jack Nicklaus. It means his fans will never be able to will him on to another win like they did at the 2019 Masters.

And it means golf will be a lot quieter for a long time to come.

The wreck on a downhill stretch of road in tony Rancho Palos Verdes was stunning, though it shouldn't have come as a shock. It marked the third time in a dozen years that Woods has been taken from vehicles in various stages of distress, a disturbing pattern that began with his infamous Thanksgiving weekend 2009 encounter with his now ex-wife outside his Florida mansion.

Four years ago he was found passed out in his car on a Florida highway with the engine running and charged with a DUI that was later plea bargained down.

And now the questions are just beginning about how he managed to crash a brand-new Genesis SUV on a clear morning on the California coast — a wreck that sheriff deputies say he was lucky to escape alive.

Suddenly, the 2019 Masters seems like it was an awful long time ago.

Woods has done things over the years we couldn't imagine on the golf course. I've been along for many of them, covering Woods from his first PGA Tour win in Las Vegas in 1996 as well as the Masters comeback win two years ago that was one of the great sports stories of our times.

He transitioned from young phenom to all-time great as the years and the wins piled up, only to be humbled by a scandal that cost him his marriage as well as a lot of fans. Then he came back to win his fifth green jacket in a storybook tale that might have made him more popular than ever.

Woods celebrated behind the 18th green that day by hugging his children, much as he celebrated becoming the youngest Masters champion ever in 1997 by hugging his father. Woods not only seemed to regain his game in the last few years but his ability to connect with others as he began smiling and signing autographs like it wasn't the chore he made it out to be most of his career.

On Sunday he was at the Genesis Invitational at nearby Riviera Country Club as the tournament host. He couldn't play because of his most recent back surgery just before Christmas but came on CBS to answer questions about whether he would be back in time for the Masters.

"God, I hope so," Woods said. "I gotta get there first."

He won't be there this year. The odds are he will never tee it up at Augusta National as a competitive player again.

The one sure thing is that golf won't be the same without him. The game will survive, of course, but it's hard to imagine it without the one player who transcended the sport.

The only thing that really matters now, though, is that Woods survived, too.

Judge: 2021 special year for Yankees

NEW YORK (AP)—Aaron Judge reported to the Yankees' spring training facility on Monday and spoke to reporters via Zoom for the first time this year on Tuesday.

Judge said the 2021 Yankees are a "special group," and this season will be "a special year," starting with the rotation.

"One thing I'm excited about is the new pitchers we signed," Judge said regarding Corey Kluber and Jameson Taillon.

Judge has missed lots of time over the last three years, not playing more than 113 games since his rookie year. He played in just 28 of a possible 60 games last year, and had the season started on time last year, would've missed more time with a broken rib and punctured lung.

But things this season are so far, so good.

"It's a little easier to hit a baseball without a broken rib here and there," he joked.

Judge added that he's been working on his footwork and first step on fly balls to try to limit his diving and crashing into walls to make his Gold Glove caliber plays, even though "It's my job to catch it."

"My big body, 275 [pounds] diving for 162 games, it does a lot of wear and tear," he said. "It just comes back to playing a little smarter."

Judge also talked about the experience of playoff elimination for four straight years. He just wants to disappear.

"I usually don't talk to too many people for a couple weeks after the season is over with," Judge said. "That's where I kind of decompress, get away from things, don't even think about baseball. I don't even want to see it on TV."

New York lost to Houston in the 2017 and 2019 AL Championship Series, to Boston in the 2018 AL Division Series and to Tampa Bay in the 2020 AL Division Series.

The Yankees have not won the World Series since 2009.

"Every year I put my heart and soul into this game," Judge said. "And to my teammates, and to this city and this organization. So that's why every year it hurts. When we lose, then I feel like I let the city down, I feel like I let my teammates down. Those cuts are deep."

But as the end of the year calendar approaches, Judge realizes it's time to look ahead. He started breaking down video of old games.

"Different things I look for to see where can I improve," Judge said. "What can I do to help this team. I trust all of my teammates to do their job. Now it's all about accountability, making sure I can step up and do my job. Last year is last year. Time to start looking forward to the new year and new team, and the things to do."

The past weighs on Judge.

"But those are just scars," Judge said. "I have scars all over me from past losses, past experiences but all it's doing is making us stronger. So I just try to build off those experiences, what worked, what didn't work. It's all going to make it sweeter in the end."

The two-time All-Star had his third straight injury-interrupted season since winning the 2017 AL Rookie of the Year award, hitting .257 with nine homers and 22 RBIs in 101 at-bats and 28 games. After homering in his first five games, he strained his right calf and played just once between Aug. 11 and Sept. 16.

Judge agreed to a one-year contract worth $10,175,000.

There have been no talks between Judge and the Yankees on a long-term deal. He is eligible for free agency after the 2022 season.

"Our time is coming down the road," Judge said. "It's something I don't really want focus on right now. I'm focused on trying to win, and that's it."

Meanwhile, Domingo Germán talked with teammates in a pair of meetings about his domestic violence suspension that kept him off the mound since September 2019.

"I thought it was impactful, I hope, and I believe that," Yankees manager Aaron Boone said. "It was a good step. It gave everyone a chance to really start that conversion. The proof is to going to be in what's ahead and how he is as a teammate and how he is in life in general. I would say it was a good day."

The 28-year-old right-hander missed the final nine games of the 2019 regular season and all nine of New York's postseason games. He was suspended for 81 games on Jan. 2 last year, a ban that had 63 games left and cost him the entire 2020 season and playoffs.

Roethlisberger agent: QB will return to Steelers

PITTSBURGH—According to Pittsburgh Steelers quarterback Ben Roethlisberger's agent Ryan Tollner, Roethlisberger will be back for his 18th season with the team.

They want Ben back and will contact me soon to address his cap situation. As we've shared since the season ended, we are happy to creatively adjust his contract to help them build the best team possible. A year ago, Ben wasn't sure if he could throw again, but he battled back to get 12 wins and the 8th division title of his career. They lost steam down the stretch and that doesn't sit well for him, so the fire burns strong and there is plenty of gas in the tank.

Roethlisberger currently has a $41 million cap hit for the 2021 season, and the team has said they have no intention of having him play at that number. At the same time, Roethlisberger seems willing to adjust his contract, but because of the CBA, there isn't as much wiggle room as you might think.

According to Tollner, Roethlisberger is still passionate about playing football and didn't like how the season ended. Roethlisberger has been to three Super Bowls during his career with the Steelers and won two of them. However, The Steelers have only won three playoff games in the last decade with Big Ben under center.

AP

Pittsburgh Steelers quarterback Ben Roethlisberger (7) throws a pass during the second half of an NFL wild-card playoff game against the Cleveland Browns in Pittsburgh, Jan. 10, 2021.

No kids game for NFL teams

NFL teams could begin playing tag on Tuesday, and it's no kids' game for the 32 teams.

Applying franchise and even transition tags to players can have major ramifications on a team's present and future. That was never more of a consideration than this year, with the salary cap decreasing for now by $18 million. That's the first time the cap has gone down, which is due to lost revenues caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

"It has always gone up," says Bill Polian, a Pro Football Hall of Fame executive. "So have the expectations of the players and agents. This is the first time this is not happening. That is a sea change."

While this mini-tidal wave likely is only for the upcoming season—the league's broadcast deals should be solidified soon and will bolster future caps—it certainly could have a significant impact.

Consider the Super Bowl champs. The Buccaneers don't relish losing the likes of linebackers Shaq Barrett and Lavonte David, wide receiver Chris Godwin, running back Leonard Fournette, tight end Rob Gronkowski or defensive tackle Ndamukong Suh.

Look for one of them, probably sackmaster Barrett or dynamic pass catcher Godwin, to get tagged for a one-year, guaranteed contract. Barrett was a franchise player in 2020 and would get about $19 million if tagged again. Godwin would get nearly $16 million.

Bucs coach Bruce Arians said after winning the NFL title that the team would find ways to keep key players. It will take some financial imagination.

"I'm very, very confident," Arians said. "I have all the trust in the world in (GM Jason Licht) and what he will do. There will be dollars involved, but I think this group is so close that sometimes dollars don't matter. But we're going to do everything we can to get the dollars right, too."

The biggest name—if not the best player—who might wind up tagged is Cowboys quarterback Dak Prescott. His ankle injury early last season muddled the picture in Dallas, but the team insists Prescott is the guy, even if it means a second straight franchise player designation—at nearly $38 million.

Polian, now an analyst for SiriusXM NFL Radio, notes that the higher-end players rarely reach total freedom.

"The 'A' players don't get to free agency," he says. "So what is out there on the market, even in this untoward year, are going to be 'B' players looking for 'A' players' money." ***(AP/NBC)***

SBL election Feb. 27

Saipan Baseball League is calling its members and other interested individuals to attend a meeting on Feb. 27at the conference room of the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.

The meeting is set for 10am and SBL will also elect its officers for the 2021 season.

SBL suspended its competition last year due to the COVID-19 pandemic and hopes to return to action this year in preparation for the CNMI's hosting of the 2022 Pacific Mini Games. ***(PR)***

RYU

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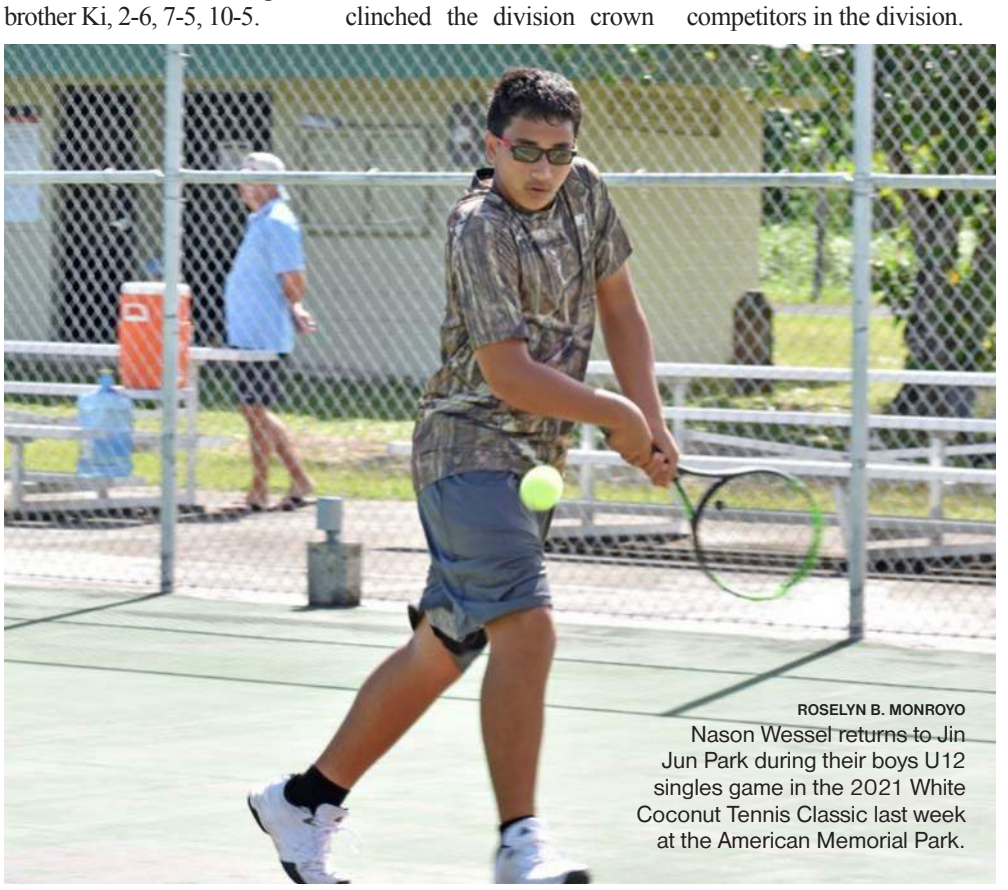
Jin Jun Park, 6-3, 6-2, and Ki Woo Lee, 6-3, 6-1, before falling to Wessel in the championship match. In the battle for third place, the winner was decided via super-tiebreaker third set with Si Woo outlasting his brother Ki, 2-6, 7-5, 10-5.

Meanwhile, Ji Min Woo, Peter Loken, and David Kwon joined Wessel on the singles champions circle after ruling their respective events last weekend.

No. 1 seed Kwon was undefeated in five games in the round-robin play to win the boys U16 singles title. He clinched the division crown after downing No. 2 seed Daniel Kang last Sunday, 6-2, 6-3. Kang got the runner-up honors, as his loss to Kwon gave him a 4-1 record in the competition, while Dev Bachani rounded out the Top 3 following his 3-2 mark. Cody Shimizu, Sam Culp, and Min Seoung Kim were the other competitors in the division.



ROSELYN B. MONROYO

Nason Wessel returns to Jin Jun Park during their boys U12 singles game in the 2021 White Coconut Tennis Classic last week at the American Memorial Park.

In the men's singles, the battle for the title was also between the Top 2 seed players. No. 1 Woo won over No. 2 Sean Lee in the finale, 6-1, 6-4. The straight set victory over Lee gave Woo a perfect record in the division, as the eventual champion also defeated Andy Kim, 6-1, 6-1, and Sam Ryu, 6-0, 7-5.

Lee, on the other hand, dropped the second set of his semis duel against Colin Ramsey before escaping with a 6-1, 4-6, 10-6 victory. Lee had an easier time in his first round match against Vincent Tudela, 6-3, 6-3. Ryu joined Woo and Lee in the Top 3 after slipping past Ramsey in the consolation game, 6-3, 2-6, 10-7.

In the men's over 40 singles finals, Loken outclassed first time Coconut Classic participant Tomas Abel, 6-4, 6-4. Loken also took two sets to beat Paul Jang, 6-0, 6-0, and Dong Min Lee, 6-0, 6-2, for the finals seat at the top half of the draw. At the bottom half, the debuting Abel won over Bishop Ryan Jimenez, 6-1, 6-2, and Eric Abragan, 6-1, 6-1, to reach the finals. Abragan and Lee squared off for the third place honors with the latter prevailing, 6-1, 6-0.

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Saturday when it takes on the winner in the duel between the Titans and Kagman Rollers.

In the men's U19, the Sonics and Ol'Aces prevailed in their respective opening matches last weekend.

The Sonics hammered Rollers Red last Saturday, 63-29, while the Ol'Aces won over Rollers White, 59-43. Next up for the Sonics is Rollers Black and the opposing teams will slug it out this Sunday. The winner of the weekend tiff will face the Ol'Aces in the semis game on March 7.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Rollers players, seen here in action during a tournament last month, are back competing at the Koblerville Gymnasium.

Doncic hits 3 to lift Mavs over Celtics

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Tiger survives car crash but career might not

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Ryu, Tang triumph

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

The first team up of junior players Simon Tang and Sam Ryu proved to be productive, as they ruled the mixed-up doubles event in the 2021 White Coconut Tennis last Sunday at the American Memorial Park tennis courts.

Tang and Ryu lorded in over in the 36-team field with the No. 3 seed clinching the division title following a 6-3, 6-4 victory over No. 6 seed Sean Lee and Min Seoung Kim in the finals. The straight set win over Kim and Lee came after Tang and Ryu pulled off a 6-2, 6-7, 11-9 upset over No. 2 seed Dong Min Lee and Hoo Wang in the semis game of the lower half of the draw. At the upper half semis tiff, Kim and Sean Lee also stunned No. 1 seed Daniel Kang and Irin Chung, 7-5, 6-4.

In other results, No. 1 seed Nason Wessel swept No. 2 seed Yutaka Kadokura in last weekend' s finale, 6-2, 6-3, for the successful title defense in the division. The 12-year-old Wessel also took two sets to beat Kadokura in the 2020 championship game, 6-0, 6-3.

Wessel secured his second straight boys U12 crown without dropping a single set in Northern Mariana Islands Tennis Association's first tournament since the COVID-19 pandemic struck. He eased past Ian Chae in the first round, 6-0, 6-1, and then topped Si Woo Lee in the semis, 6-2, 6-1, for a return trip to the finals.

Kadokura also swept his first two opponents, beating

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ROSELYN B. MONROYO
Sam Ryu hits the ball from the baseline.

ROSELYN B. MONROYO
Simon Tang goes for a backhand return during his and Sam Ryu's mixed-up doubles game against Bishop Ryan Jimenez and Wataru Kadokura in the 2021 White Coconut Tennis Classic last weekend at the American Memorial Park.

15 teams join NMI RBA spring caging

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

After its Christmas basketball tournament, Rollers Basketball Association is back on the court with the staging of the NMI RBA Spring Madness.

The competition kicked off over the weekend at the Koblerville Gymnasium with 15 teams spread in three divisions—co-ed U14/women's U17, boys U17, and men's U19.

Four squads are entered in the co-ed U14/women's U17 with Lady Rollers, Rollers Black, Rollers White, and the Ol'Aces making up the field. The division has a double-elimination format and played its first two games last weekend.

Rollers Black drew first blood in the co-ed U14/women's U17 following a 54-22 rout of the Lady Rollers, while the Ol'Aces also had an easy victory in the opening week after dominating Rollers White, 31-8. Rollers Black and the Ol'Aces will meet this Saturday for the first finals berth, while the Lady Rollers and Rollers White will collide in a make-or-break match also this weekend. The championship game in the division is set for March 13 with the team entering the finals with an unbeaten record getting a twice-to-beat advantage.

In the boys U17, which has six teams, the Ol'Aces had a winning debut following a 66-52 triumph over the Hotshots. Rollers Black, Chinatown Titans, Kagman Rollers, and Rollers White are the other teams entered in the division.

The CT Titans were scheduled to have their first game against the Kagman Rollers last Sunday, but results of the game were unavailable at press time. The Ol'Aces were also slated to meet Rollers Black last Sunday, while Rollers White will have its debut in the tournament this

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SAIPAN TRIBUNE
Rollers defenders challenge the shot of a Sun Palace player during a holiday tournament last month at the Koblerville Gymnasium, which is also the venue of the ongoing Rollers Basketball Association-hosted event.